National Types of Old Pewter

By Howard Herschel Cotterell

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National Types of Old Pewter

This edition is limited to one thousand and fifty copies, of which one thousand are for sale.

This is number 592

Plate I — An Array of Delights

On the top and bottom shelves are shown eight late seventeenth century, English flat-lidded tankards or measures, the small one on the top shelf and the one with spiked lid below being very unusual.

Behind these tankards, on the top shelf, from left to right, appear a 9½-inch plate salved from the Spanish galleon, sunk in Tobermory Bay in 1588; a 12-inch dish by Thomas Alderson of London, with the royal cypher of King George IV, at whose coronation banquet in Westminster Hall it was used, and in common with many other pieces from the same set, afterwards stolen by the spectators; a 9½-inch plate by Mary Redshaw of London, which bears the badge of Staple Inn, London, and is inscribed "Staple Inn, 1751."

On the second shelf appear two fine narrow-rimmed seventeenth-century plates, 8¾ inches diameter; the one on the left being engraved with wriggled-work design, is probably some fifty years earlier than the other which is *c.* 1675. The fine Stuart-type dish in the centre is from Pittenweem Castle, and bears, with the date 1704, the impaled Arms of Durham of Grange, the impaled coat being caused probably by the marriage of cousins. From the general appearance of this dish it would appear to be a generation older than the date engraved upon it.

The centre candlestick is a very fine one, *c.* 1700, and the other two are described in the text of this volume. The small bowl with two handles is one of the very few absolutely genuine Scottish pewter quaichs in existence and is a magnificent example. The other two pieces on this shelf are standing-salts of the late seventeenth century and very fine pieces of their type.

The flagon on left of the bottom row is a fine Charles II example, and the handleless, unlidded pot to the right is engraved "Miles Roe at ye Coach and Horses in ye New Palace, Westminster," and is probably *c.* 1740.

(These pieces are all from the collection of Lewis Clapperton, Esq., C.A., of Glasgow, and the photograph was taken by Messrs. T. & R. Annan of that city, whilst they were on loan at the recent "Provand's Lordship Club Loan Exhibition of Antique Furniture," held at Glasgow in 1924.)

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National Types of

OLD PEWTER

By

HOWARD HERSCHEL COTTERELL

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To
"The Thousandth Man,"
My Friend,
JOHN FRANCIS BOURKE
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
These few pages are dedicated
with deep affection.

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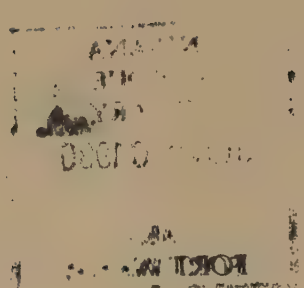

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FOREWORD

There exist several excellent works on the pewter of Great Britain. An authoritative and comprehensive work on the pewter of America has recently appeared. For the amateur of soft metal wares who insists upon confining himself to the products either of the British Isles or of America such works are perhaps quite sufficient.

But the true amateur is usually characterized by a wide catholicity of taste; that, indeed, is the trait which distinguishes him from the specializing collector. He is the only genuine internationalist, for he harbors no prejudices. Objects of art appeal to him in the first instance by virtue of intrinsic qualities, which are rendered only the more attractive by a perceptible aura of the exotic. The pleasure which such specimens convey is a double one, compounded of the joy of recognizing merit and the more slowly unfolding satisfaction of distinguishing the subtle attributes which identify nationality and reveal authorship.

Pewterware is in itself peculiarly adapted to the requirements of the amateur. From earliest times to within a generation or two it has been an almost universal product of civilized society. Hence it is, even yet, everywhere to be encountered. Its texture and color are delightful; it appears in a fascinating multiplicity of forms. And lastly, since it is a ware largely of, by, and for the people, it carries with it always a strong savor of nationality.

Curiously enough, however, until Mr. Cotterell began the preparation of this book, it had, apparently, occurred to no one to outline the salient characteristics which distinguish the pewterware of one country from that of another, or the ware of Great Britain as a whole from that of the Continent in general and in particular. The performing of just that service is the purpose of the pages which follow. The treatment will be general, as must needs be where the subject is of such extended scope. For obvious reasons, all discussion of American pewter has been avoided. But the method pursued should enable the fairly ready classification of unmarked pewter according to its probable age, nationality, and relative desirability.

National Types of Old Pewter first appeared as a series of articles in ANTIQUES. The warmth of the reception accorded to its serial appearance fully demonstrated the advisability of preserving the material in permanent form for convenient reference. The text has, therefore, been carefully revised and corrected by the author. A number of illustrations have been added and an indispensable index supplied. As now presented to the public, the book will, it is hoped, constitute the auspicious beginning of a series of brief, authoritative monographs for amateurs and collectors.

HOMER EATON KEYES.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In the following pages I have endeavoured to give a serious and reliable lead to those lovers of old pewter who desire to know something more of the pieces in their possession, or of those which from time to time they may come across in their quest of the beautiful.

From my own experience as a collector, an experience covering nearly a quarter of a century, I know the wants of the genus collector, and these are not accurate analyses of the constituent parts of "fine" pewter, "lay metal" and such like, but some guidance as to the age, provenance, and make of his treasures.

Of course, to the serious collector, a nodding acquaintance with the constituent parts of various alloys is at least necessary; but instead of piling up page after page of these statistical tables, the average collector is better served by having before him such information as shall enable him to become familiar with treasures and able to recognize them when he sees them.

I hope, and sincerely believe, that a careful study of the notes which go to form the pages of the present monograph will prove of real assistance and that the book will fill a great hiatus in the existing literature on the subject of old pewter.

HOWARD H. COTTERELL.

Croxley Green,
Herts., England.

NATIONAL TYPES
OF
OLD PEWTER

Chapter I

IN an early number of the magazine ANTIQUES the Editor vouchsafed the following remark:

"Service is to be rendered by a writer who will summarize and illustrate the major characteristics whereby the nationality of pewter pieces may be determined with reasonable accuracy."

These words are responsible for this book. While much has been written about pewter, particularly about the pewter of the British Isles, no attempt has hitherto been made to assist the general collector in determining the nationality of examples which he finds either quite unmarked or with the mark virtually obliterated by wear and abuse.

In pewter work, as in other handicrafts, national peculiarities have a way of asserting themselves either in design or in tricks of technique. He would, indeed, be a rash critic who would undertake in all cases to distinguish these peculiarities and to assign an unmarked example with unqualified assurance to a specific locality and period. Yet, at the same time, he would hardly deserve to claim authority were he unwilling to state the fundamental considerations upon which, in any instance, he is likely to base his judgment. In the following chapters my endeavor will be to state just such fundamental considerations, which I shall emphasize with illustrative pictures.

Fig. 1 — AN OAK DRESSER ARRAYED IN PEWTER
From an unnamed English interior.

Before, however, I proceed to my task, perhaps I may be permitted a word or two in praise of old pewter as a decoration, from the æsthetic point of view and also from its historical side.

Unlike silver and gold, pewter relies on no exterior ornamentation for its claim upon our veneration, yet the quiet, unobtrusive charm of a well-chosen and well-cleaned array, especially if displayed against its natural background, old oak, is one which speaks to us of "our ain fireside" and weaves into the flickering lights of blazing logs, memories of our ancestors and days long since gone by. It was for them their daily environment, and it will ever appeal to us on that account with a call which is well-nigh irresistible.

By way of illustration I give here a few examples of pewter so displayed. Figure 2 was taken in a former home of my own. The delightful little peep in Figure 1 must be nameless for the reason that it came to me without its owner's name, but is, I think, sufficient of itself to persuade the greatest sceptic into becoming a collector forthwith. Figure 3 shows pieces in the collection of Dr. Young of Manchester (England).

* * *

"Is it only nice people who collect pewter; or does collecting pewter make people nice?" So goes the *bon mot*. Be this true or not, the appreciation of pewter makes real

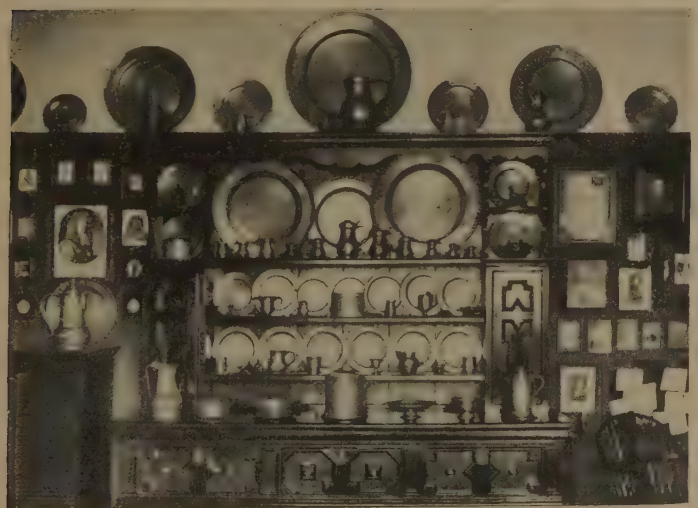


Fig. 2 — PEWTER AND OLD OAK
"The quiet, unobtrusive charm of a well chosen array." *From the author's collection.*

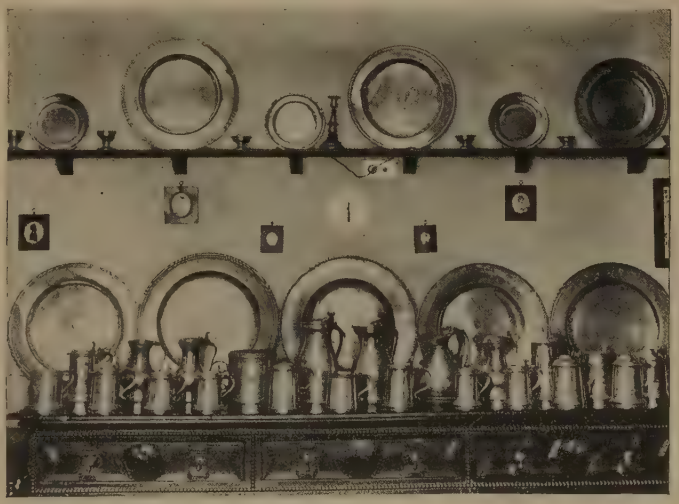
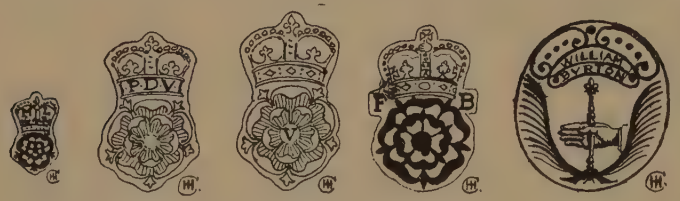


Fig. 3 — ANOTHER CASE OF AFFINITY
An oaken surface of rich color almost inevitably becomes a place of such a congregation. *From the collection of Dr. Young, Manchester (England).*



Figs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 — "Rose and Crown" Marks
Where initials appear *in* the *Crown* or *on* the *Rose*, the piece is Continental. Figure 7 shows a British mark with an initial each side of the *Crown;* Figure 8 shows a British mark with the full name in a device that might suggest a crown. The other marks, *4, 5, 6,* are Continental and exhibit their peculiarities.

Figs. 9, 10, 11, 12 — Angel Marks
The *Angel* as a touch mark almost invariably indicates a Continental piece. *From rubbings.*

demand upon our powers of discrimination, and, when really developed, points to the possession of a truly artistic soul, capable of sensing beauty of form and outline.

Then again it appeals to us, and perhaps this is one of its strongest claims, on account of its antiquity. Before china, earthenware, enamelled-iron and other more or less modern inventions had been conceived in the mind of man, pewter was reigning in the height of its popularity; back through the days of the early Georges and Queen Anne, on through the Stuart dynasty and the troubled Cromwellian period, ever backwards through the reign of the virgin Queen and the days of bluff King Hal, and still we have not tracked it to its source, for is it not yet being found in the excavated sites of Roman towns and camps? And even there its roots are not!

History, aye and plenty of it, and personal association too! What of the dinner service bearing the arms of David Garrick, some specimens of which are in the fine collection of my friend Antonio de Navarro? Could they but speak, what tales those pieces could tell! The Carolean rose-water dishes with the arms of King Charles in enamels in the center . . . have they no tale to tell, no picture to conjure up, of dainty ladies moistening equally dainty fingers in the scented waters? . . . And so one could carry on the story; but space forbids and I must turn to my task.

* * *

Let us, then, consider a few facts which will enable us, at first sight, to recognize the country of origin of several well-known types; for a thorough appreciation of these facts will make many seemingly impossible mysteries vanish into thin air.

Initials in the Rose and Crown

First, then, we will take the mark of the *Tudor Rose and Crown;* and I lay it down as an incontrovertible fact that, where initials appear either *in* the *Crown* (*Fig. 5*), or *on* the heart of the *Rose* (*Fig. 6*), such pieces are either of Belgian, Dutch, French, German, or Swiss origin. The same remarks apply to very small impressions of the *Rose and Crown* mark, similar to that shown in Figure 4.

After something like twenty years of the most careful study, I cannot call to mind a single instance where the initial letters of the maker's name appear either *in* the *Crown*, or *on* the *Rose*, on an American or a British piece. There are a few instances of the full names appearing *in* a crown shaped device (*Fig. 8*), and of initials appearing at the *sides* of the *Crown*, on British pieces (*Fig. 7*), but that is all.

Here then, to begin with, is one all-embracing test by which two very considerable portions of all the pewter still in existence may be separated with certainty and without a trace of anxious questioning.

Three or More Initials: Continental

A second test for European—as opposed to American and British—pewter, is the appearance of *three or more* letters, either in the maker's touch itself, in the *Rose and Crown* mark, or in the imitation silver-marks (or as we call them, for want of a better name, "hall-marks"). I do not think there are three exceptions amongst all the known British marks.

Fig. 13 — Hammer Marks
The clearly visible marks of the hammer on the flanks of this London piece are characteristic of British pewter, and of well made Continental pieces also.

Angel Marks: Continental

A third indication of European origin is the use of an *Angel's* figure for the device in the maker's mark (*Figs. 9, 10, 11, 12*), or the "hall-mark." The *Angel* may be flying, standing with palm branch in hand, typifying Peace, or as Justice with sword and scales, or what not; but, if she is there, the piece is of European origin broadly speaking. There are some half dozen British marks wherein the *Angel* appears, but there is no mistaking her when once the student has become familiar with her Continental sister.

Hammer Marks

Finally—but on this so much reliance cannot be placed as on the foregoing—

the absence of hammer marks around the underside of the edge of the well of plates and dishes, points to their *not* being British pieces. At the same time it must be remembered that many Continental pieces were likewise hammered: in some French specimens very beautifully, not only around the well, but all over it, and also on the rim.

Eagle and Flag

Thus, even in the types of marking, we are able to discriminate between British and European, whereas most of the known American marks bear, as the device, either the *Eagle*, the *Stars and Stripes*, or both, or the name of the maker in a rectangle, with sometimes his address; but both of these latter are frequently met with on British pieces too. Of course the *Eagle* also appears in many British marks, but here, again, there is no mistaking him for his American cousin, once both have been compared.

The line of demarcation between American and British pewter is perhaps the most difficult of all to draw. Many of the vessels of the two countries are in some ways expressive of their nationality, but this applies more especially to those for holding liquids. Where plates and dishes are concerned, however, it is a different matter; for in both countries the same types were in vogue. Nevertheless, I am bold to say that there are very few instances of *British* plates or dishes extant today on which there is *no* sign of a maker's mark, and perhaps the surmise in the editorial note of ANTIQUES (Vol. II., p. 199) is correct, that where these are unmarked, they are of American origin: though, of course, many of the American pieces bore very fine marks. Many European plates are unmarked.

Fig. 14 — TANKARD AND THUMBPIECE

The thumbpiece displays characteristics indicative of nationality.

Ornament as a Guide

Let us now turn from the markings to such adornments of pewter as point an unerring finger to the country of origin. In this connection we have many things to guide us.

Of course, type itself is one of the best guides to the connoisseur of experience; but my efforts, at the moment, are directed towards putting before the *would-be* connoisseur, such power of information as shall — by rolling away the stones of doubtfulness and thus clearing the lonely furrow which each of us has trodden or must tread — form the solid basis whereon future self-confidence shall rest.

Let us turn first to the *thumbpieces* of flagons, ewers, lidded tankards and similar vessels.

By *thumbpiece* is meant that upward projection from the lid, which acts as a purchase to the thumb when it is desired to raise the cover either for drinking purposes or for pouring out the contents (*Fig 14*). These thumbpieces take many forms, and several of them are indicative of well-defined localities (large or small as the case may be). We will proceed to consider them individually; with a description and illustration of each distinct type.

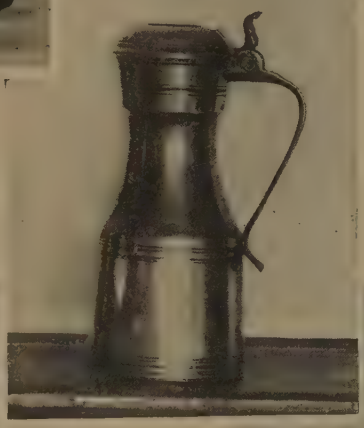


Fig. 16 — SCOTCH TAPPIT-HEN

Compare with Figure 15.

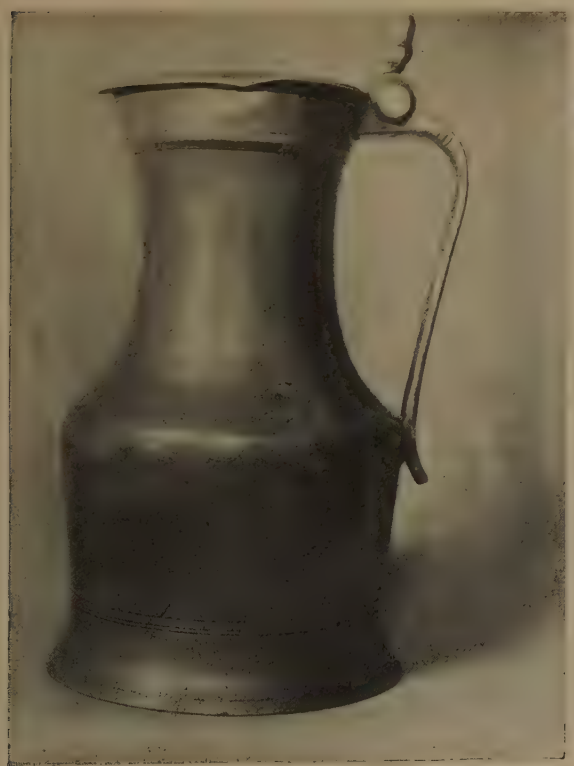


Fig. 15

Fig. 15—NORMANDY FLAGON

Note the Continental thumbpiece. This type of flagon is sometimes mistaken for the Scotch tappit-hen. See Figures 16 and 17.

Fig. 17 — SCOTCH TAPPIT-HEN

This crested type is later, yet rarer, than the uncrested one above.

Fig. 17

Fig. 18 — Double Acorn Thumbpiece
The lid of the flagon shown below. The heart shape is characteristic of Continental pewter.

Type 1. The "Double Acorn" Thumbpiece

This type *never* appears on anything but European pewter and it is here shown in two positions; one as a complete flagon, back view, the other displaying the front and the heart-shaped lid (*Figs. 18* and *19*) *which latter also never appears* on any but European pieces.

This thumbpiece and lid are very often, though not invariably, found together. The flagon shown is of the Guernsey (Channel Islands) type, which type strangely enough is sometimes found with English makers' marks, having been made by them for export thence and to Normandy. But the type is a purely Continental one.

Fig. 19 — Double Acorn Thumbpiece
The flagon is of the Channel Islands type, with the distinctive thumbpiece which is never found on anything but European pewter.

I feel that I must here call attention to a widely accepted but very flagrant error of which many young collectors are guilty, and dealers more so; the misdescribing of Normandy Flagons (*Fig. 15*) as Scotch Tappit-hens (*Figs. 16* and *17*). As will be seen from a comparison of the illustrations, the Normandy flagon has a heart-shaped lid with "Double Acorn" thumbpiece, whereas the tappit-hens have domed lids, a deeper upper lip, no spreading base as in the former; and the thumbpiece is entirely different, having more the characteristics of the German types to which reference will be made later.

Moreover, let it be noted that there are two varieties of tappit-hen; the uncrested, or earlier variety, and the crested or later type. The word crested refers to the presence, or otherwise, of the knob on the lid; and strangely enough the crested type, though the later, is far the more difficult of the two to obtain.

One other point in this connection. The true Scots tappit-hen held a Scots pint, which is the equivalent of three English pints and is some eleven inches high. There are many smaller ones and one or two larger sizes of the tappit-hen shape, but the word tappit-hen can only rightly be applied to the Scots pint size. Figures 20 and 21 show the exceptionally fine sets of this type in the collection of my friend, Lewis Clapperton, Esq., C.A., of Glasgow.

The true tappit-hen has, inside the neck and a little way down, what looks like a pimple or blister in the metal, but this is placed there by design and not by accident, and denotes the point of full-measure; it is called the "plouk" or "plouck."

Type 2. The "Ball" Thumbpiece

Of this there are several kinds, but their segregation into their respective localities will be made easy by a careful study of the remarks and illustrations which follow.

We will take first the European types, of which there are the German and the Scandinavian. The German embraces several more or less similar kinds, all of which will be readily recognized by assimilating the details of the two shown in Figures 24 and 26, from which it will be noted that these thumbpieces are very large in size, often too much so for the place they occupy. In Figure 24, for example, the size of the ball gives to the whole almost a top-heavy appearance. The ball is seldom less than three-fourths of an inch in diameter and it is frequently very considerably larger.

The one of which we are speaking shows a very usual type, with narrow fillet around the center and a small projecting finial on the top. The bold outward sweep of the handle in this piece is also characteristically German; whereas that in Figure 26 is more reminiscent of the French types. The ball in the second illustration is, it will be noted, a plain sphere with incised spiral lines radiating down the upper half, from the base of a small decorative upper finial.

In both the illustrations, let it be noted further, the ball does not rest directly on the lid—or rather on the hinge—

Fig. 20 — Tappit-Hens
Exceptionally fine sets, crested and uncrested. *From the collection of Lewis Clapperton, Esq.*

Fig. 21 — Tappit-Hens
The two lidless examples are known as the Aberdeen type of tappit-hens and were made without lids.

Fig. 22 — Baluster Measures
The "Ball" thumbpiece is here at its best.

Fig. 23 — English Stuart Tankards
Amateurs try to glorify the Scandinavian pieces into Stuart tankards such as these.

connection—but is raised from it on a short stem as on footed cups and chalices.

From a study of these two pieces, all others of the same nationality will at once be recognized. One of the chief characteristics of the "Ball" thumbpiece being its "overpowering" presence.

The Scandinavian type, Figure 25, is not a true "Ball" thumbpiece. In fact, although many are more clearly spherical than the one illustrated, they never present a perfect sphere, but one more or less flattened; yet it is difficult to include them in any of the other types. The handle, usually decorated in fashion similar to that of the illustration, is of pleasing design; but compare the acute bend with the full curve of that in Figure 24. This type is often confounded by beginners with the English Stuart tankards illustrated on the left-hand side of Figure 23.

Leaving the Continental European varieties we will now consider the purest of all the "Ball" thumbpieces, illustrated in Figure 22, which shows four fine little Scotch baluster-measures from the collection of Mrs. Carvick Webster of Monkton. Here we have the ball at its best; simple, dignified, restrained; seeking nothing from extraneous adornment, but content to leave its own simplicity and super-evident fitness for its purpose to make its mute appeal to the imagination. I know of no type of pewter vessel which seems more eminently suited to the metal in which it is fashioned than is this measure; and though at one time such pieces must have been in use in large numbers in certain parts of Scotland, they are by no means easy to acquire.

This ball ranges in diameter from about three-eighths to half an inch, never larger, and, as will be seen, there is not the slightest risk of mistaking it for the European kinds. And, whereas the latter appear on all kinds of flagons, tankards, and ewers, this little Scotch fellow spent all its days in faithful allegiance to its first love, the baluster, as shown in the illustration.

Identification by Style

In considering style as a guide to dating pewter, whether as indicated by thumbpiece or by handle, it is always well to bear in mind that pewterers were often accustomed to follow the designs of contemporary gold- and silver-smiths. It is also well to remember that many pewterers, particularly those of Scotland, were often conservative, and followed the designs originated by their forebears, rather than creating new styles.

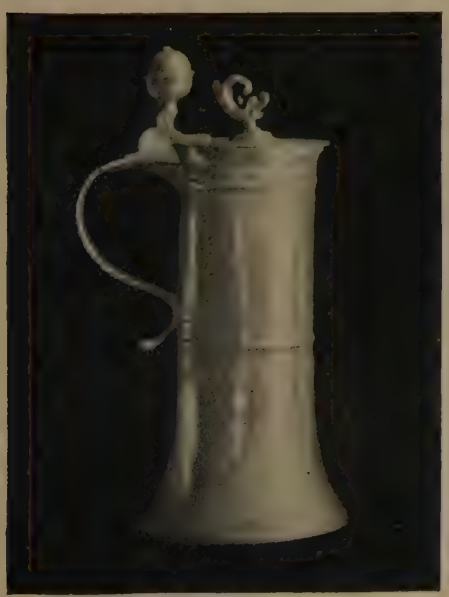


Fig. 24 — The "Ball" Thumbpiece
A German example with a top-heavy ball.

Fig. 25 — Scandinavian Thumbpiece
This is not a true ball in any sense.

Fig. 26 — A German Example
Similar type to Figure 24.

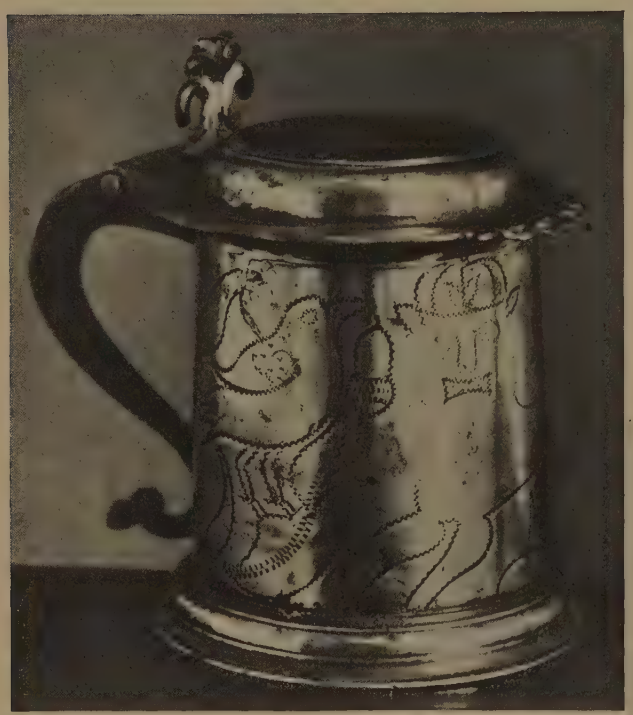


Plate II — TANKARDS (*English, seventeenth century*)

Engraved wriggled work design. Compare the thumbpiece of the upper tankard with those shown in Figure 23. The thumbpiece on the tankard to the right consists of two love-birds, respectively, beak to beak. *Owned by Ernest Hunter and John Richardson.*

Chapter II

Type 3 — The "Shell" Thumbpiece

Fig. 27 — SHELL THUMB-PIECE
The Continental type, detail of which is shown in Figure 28.

TWO distinct varieties of this type are known, and one sub-type, which has come to be known as the "Embryo-shell."

Again we will take the European first. But, unfortunately, I have been unable to get a really good photograph to illustrate it; but Figure 27 will show its main characteristics, and perhaps my sketch (*Fig. 28*) will serve for the details, which, of course, vary somewhat in different specimens; though the main characteristics are the same in all.

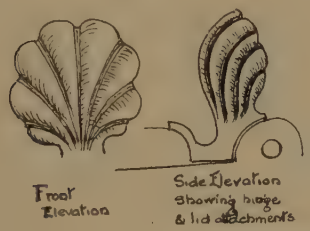


Fig. 28

Here is a big, bold shell, some seven-eighths of an inch across, and generally of a pleasing and well set-up form, some specimens being very massive and well suited to the hard wear to which they were subjected. This is a very common thumbpiece on Dutch and Flemish pieces, and is met with occasionally on the cylindrical French wine measures (on which latter, however, it is more usual to find Type 4). I have never come across it on the pewter of other countries.

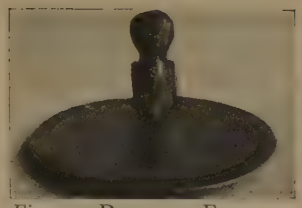


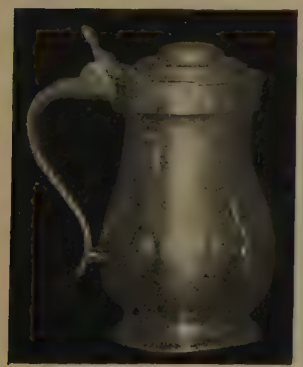
Fig. 32—DETAIL OF FIGURE 33

Figure 29 shows the Scotch "Shell" thumbpiece, which appears on the pear-shaped measures of that country. It is but about half the size of the one just described, much less accurately fashioned and far less adapted to hard wear. It appears on both the Glasgow (*Fig. 30*) and the Edinburgh (*Fig. 31*) types. And here let it be noted that the main difference between these two latter is in the cover; for, whereas the measures of Glasgow origin have a domed lid, either single or double as the case may be, the Edinburgh lids have sloping concave sides.

Fig. 29 — SCOTCH SHELL
Less vigorous than the Continental type.

The "Embryo-shell" is well shown in Figures 32 and 33. It is a most appropriate name, coined by the late L. Ingleby Wood, author of that splendid volume *Scottish Pewterware and Pewterers*. This thumbpiece, which is shell-shaped, as will be seen from the illustrations, is quite plain and displays no such radiating flutes as the others.

Fig. 33 — EMBRYO-SHELL
Well named, since it displays only the form but not the radiations of the developed shell.



Figs. 30 and 31 — SHELLS OF GLASGOW AND EDINBURGH
Glasgow measures show domed lids; Edinburgh covers have sloping, concave sides.

Type 4 — The "Bent-back-wedge" Thumbpiece

This is well shown in Figures 34 and 35. It consists of a wedge-shaped piece of pewter with a backward curve, and of rectangular section, "growing" out of the hinge-attachment.

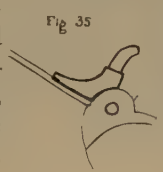


Fig. 34 — BENT-BACK WEDGE
Characteristically French.

Figs. 36, 37, 38, 39, 39a — ERECT THUMBPIECE
First two German; last three English. Though similarity of thumbpiece might confuse, there is no mistaking the short German handles for English ones.

This I think one must put down as a purely French type, though isolated examples of Flemish influence one would expect to find where two countries are so closely associated.

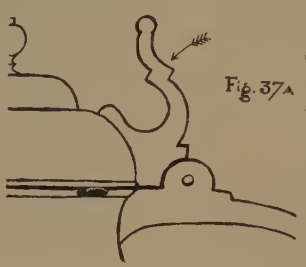


Fig. 37A

Type 5—The "Erect" Thumbpiece

Shall I call it this? I can think of no more fitting name; and the difficulty of an exact description will at once be seen by reference to Figures 36 to 39*a*, which I have chosen as representative examples, the first two being German and the last three English. It will be seen how very similar these are, yet there are slight points of difference, for in the German pieces one will note that there is a distinct break in the curves at both the back and the front, forming, as it were, a square in the profile, as indicated by the arrow in Figure 37*a*. This is not so apparent in the English ones. Moreover, the thumbpieces on the latter are very often pierced through with a heart-shaped pattern. This is almost invariably the case in flagons of the kind shown in Figure 39, and is shown fairly clearly in Figure 39*a*.

However, quite apart from the thumbpiece, the handle will generally give the deciding vote in case of doubt as to nationality; for such short handles as those shown in Figures 36 and 37—reaching barely half way down the drum — are unknown in British pewter.

One occasionally finds a similar, though smaller, thumbpiece of this type on flagons emanating from the Low-Countries; and a comparison with the thumbpieces on the tappit-hens, illustrated in Figures 20 and 21, will show more than a nodding acquaintance with it in Scotland.

Figure 38, examples of which are in existence dating back some three and a quarter centuries (one is known to the writer bearing the date 1601) presents one of the earliest existing types of British pewter flagon. These flagons were always stalwartly made, to which perhaps is attributable the fact of their having come down to us through so long a period of time.

Type 6—The "Embryo Double-Volute" Thumbpiece

One can think of no better name for this type, for, though it does not correspond exactly to the Ionic Volute, it, nevertheless, would seem to be evolved from it. And, as if to confirm the thought that this design was in the minds of the earlier pewterers, we find it more faithfully reproduced in the "Double-Volute" baluster measures which will be described under Type 10.

Both the pieces figured under this type are British. Indeed, this thumbpiece would seem to be confined almost entirely to British pieces, for I have seldom come across it elsewhere. Figure 40 shows a fine example of it on a Stuart English flagon of most pleasing type (*circa 1660*), a type eagerly sought for by collectors. Figures 41 and 42 show the back and front view, respectively, of its Scotch analogue, wherefrom it will be seen that the thumbpiece is more flatly modelled but still carries out the main characteristics of the volute design.

At this point, I feel we must leave the subject of flagons and thumbpieces, and, as a stepping-stone on our way to the wine-measures of various countries, give a passing glance at the national thumbpieces of jugs and tankards, though the word "jug" as applied to pewter sounds as utterly wrong as it does to speak of a china "flagon."

On the continent of Europe one does not find the same allegiance to the *tankard* as is to be met with in England,

Figs. 40, 41, 42 — EMBRYO DOUBLE-VOLUTE
The first and more suave type is English; the more uncompromising, Scotch.

Figs. 43 and 44 — BRITISH THUMBPIECES
The first is William and Mary; the second George III; and the last two George II.

Fig. 45 — George III

where it seems almost a part of the constitution! Let us, therefore, merely illustrate a few typically British thumbpieces which are to be found on tankards and "jugs." These are given in their order of date, in so far as possible.

Figure 23 shows late Stuart to early Georgian examples from the collection of Richard Davison, Esq.; Figure 43 is William and Mary, from the collection of Walter G. Churcher, Esq.; Figure 44, left, is late George III; right, are two early Georgian, from the author's collection; and the seven pieces in Figure 45 are also in the Churcher collection, and are George III; and Figure 50 is George IV. There are, of course, other types, such as the expanded leaf or flattened shell, whichever title suits it best (*Fig. 49*), from a piece in the collection of Ernest Hunter, Esq., of Chesham-Bois; and others, which, however, space forbids me to describe in detail. So we pass on to a short consideration of the thumbpieces of English measures, the Scotch and European types having been already reviewed under the preceding ones.

Fig. 46 — Hammer Head
An early and rare type.

Fig. 47 — Baluster Measure
The appropriateness of the name is evident. All baluster measures have a flat, circular lid.

This final group is made up of the English baluster measures, which are four in number, though the last of all displays two varieties.

It will be well to state here that baluster measures *always* have *flat circular* lids, as opposed to the heart-shaped European type, and, with the exception of the Scotch flagon, illustrated in Figures 41 and 42, wherein the lid though round has a very slightly raised centre, they are the only known measures which possess this feature.

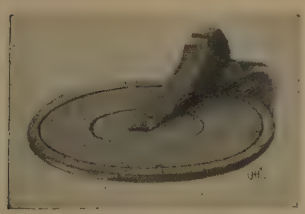


Fig. 48 — Wedge Shape
Extremely rare.

Type 7 — The "Wedge-shaped" Thumbpiece

Fig. 49 — Leaf Thumbpiece

Fig. 50 — George IV

This is found on the earliest-known form of the English baluster, and is extremely rare. Not more than half a dozen of this type are known to exist at the present time. This type is well shown in Figure 48, and, as will be seen, consists of a wedge-shaped piece lying, as it were, on its side on the lid, with a slight projection at its uppermost point to give a purchase to the thumb.

Pieces with this thumbpiece date back at least to the time of Henry VIII and are generally in a more or less battered condition, with traces of what looks like gilding. In reality this is oxidation caused by the action of the air on the surface of the metal.

Type 8 — The "Hammer-head" Thumbpiece (Figs. 46 and 47)

This is another early and rare type, which has the appearance of a double-faced hammer, laid sideways on the preceding type, which it superseded. Specimens are in existence which bear the date 1670, but it came into being at an earlier period.

Type 9 — The "Bud" Thumbpiece

This type followed the preceding one and is distinguished by its being somewhat in the form of an opening bud or fern frond. It is not easy to show well the thumbpiece and lid attachment together, so I have endeavoured to put it before my readers satisfactorily in Figures 51, 52, and 53.

Figure 53 is taken from an unique little measure in the collection of Major John Richardson, D.S.O. It has, around the handle, several narrow bands, each stamped with a crown and the letters G. R. (for Georgius Rex), evidently applied at different times to show that its capacity was up to the standard when tested by the government inspector.

Figs. 51, 52, 53 — The Bud

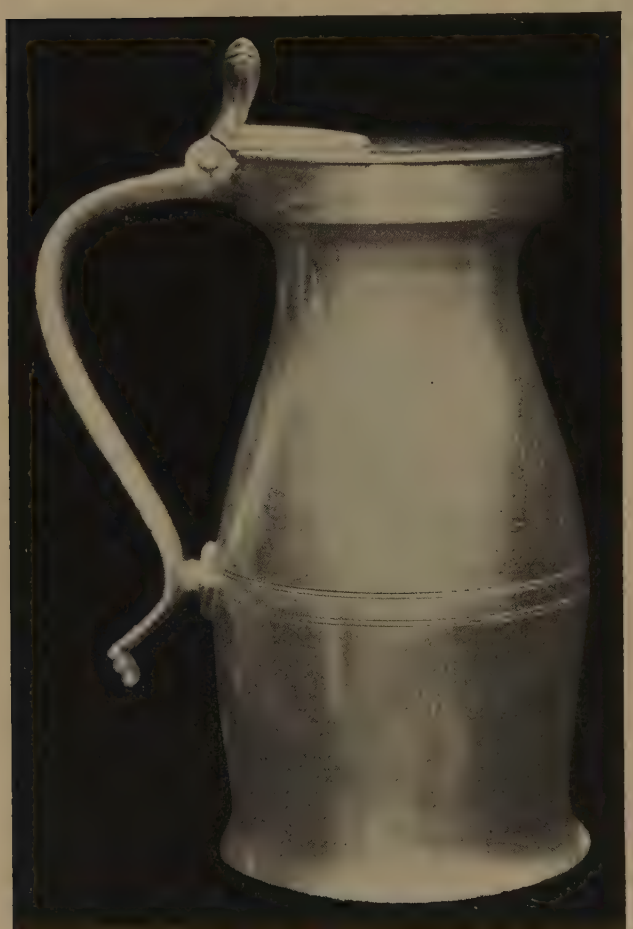


Plate III — Gallon Baluster Measure (*English, c. 1716*)

A fine example of the "Bud" type. *Owned by F. N. Miller.*

Chapter III

Type 10 — The "Double Volute" Thumbpiece

ONCE seen, this type (*Figs. 54* and *55*) will not easily be forgotten, for there is nothing like it elsewhere. It appears on the latest type of English balusters, which came into being about the beginning of the eighteenth century and remained as the prevailing type for upward of a century.

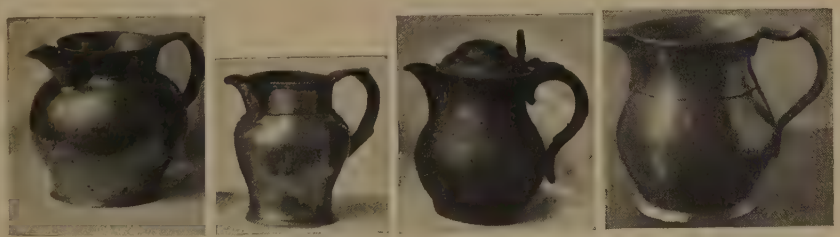
Figs. 54 and 55 — Double Volute

This thumbpiece is *always* attached to the lid by a fleur-de-lys, but whereas, on the larger sizes (gallon down to half pint), this fleur-de-lys is as shown in Figure 54, it appears on the smaller sizes on a diamond-shaped piece of metal, as shown in Figure 55, a feature which, as will be seen in Figure 56, is repeated on the body at its junction with the lower sweep of the handle.

Another innovation which came in with this type is the bulbous terminal at the lower end of the handle, which, up to now, had ended in the flattened curve, as in Figure 51.

The foregoing would seem to cover all the recognised types of thumbpiece which it is necessary to consider here; and it will be found that they alone are sufficient to define the nationality of nine out of ten of all the lidded vessels which the average collector is likely to come across.

Fig. 56 — Double Volute Thumbpiece
Showing diamond-shaped plate at junction of body and lower sweep of handle.



Figs. 57, 58, 59, 60 — Ale Jugs

Lidless Types

We shall, therefore, now turn to a short consideration of some unlidded types; and, first, we shall speak of what many people describe as "toast and water jugs" (*Figs. 57* and *58*), so called because of the strainer in the lip, which, however, was placed there in order to keep back the hops or other solid material when pouring out the *ale;* for these were ale-jugs and are far too plentiful today to admit of the theory of toast and water — which has never been in great vogue with the healthy Britisher as a form of sustenance.

Fig. 62 — Baluster Measure
Added rim to change capacity.

Figures 49 and 59 show the lidded variety of this vessel, the latter being inserted here merely for a comparison of its shape with that of Figure 60, which is a New York piece, bearing the mark of Boardman & Hart, and which, but for the depressed upper portion of the handle and the overlapping junction therein, seems to bear out much the same main features.

Figure 60*a* shows a fine series, half-quartern to gallon, of the type which was common in England from the reign of George IV to Victoria and is even in use in many places at the present day.

Figure 61 shows a set of unlidded baluster measures, which, from the bulbous terminals to the handles,

Fig. 60a — Lidless Measures
A fine series from a half-quartern to a gallon. Common during the nineteenth century.

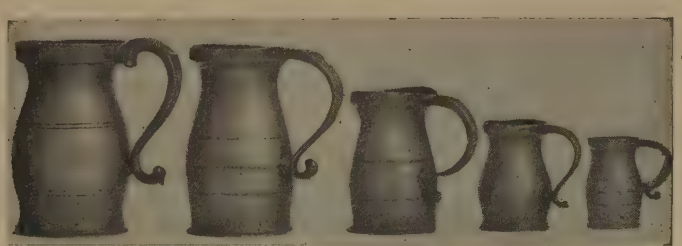


Fig. 61 — Baluster Measures
Lidless type; but shape of handle and its terminal betrays double volute period.

Figs. 63, 64, 65 — Handle Terminals (*Scotch and English*)
First two are Scotch. "Fish-tail" terminal of third shows English make.

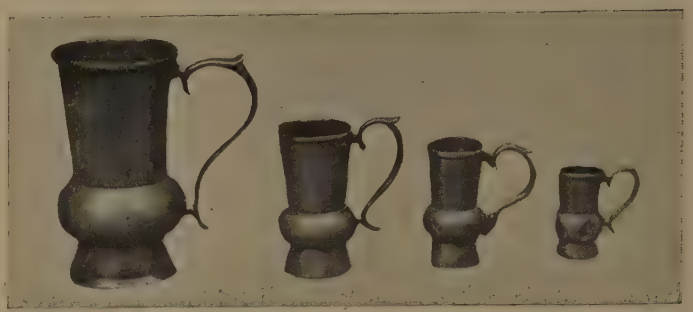


Fig. 66 — Thistle-Shaped Measure (*Scotch*)
The bulb affords a thrifty means of holding back some of the contents of the measure.

will be recognised as of the double-volute period. Figure 62 shows another of this period, but with an attached band around the upper edge of the lip, which has been added to convert it from the old wine capacity to that of the imperial standard.

Figures 63 and 64 show types of handle terminals peculiar to Scotland, wherein the one appears as a blunt end and the other as a rudimentary split end. Had these been English, each would have had a fish-tail terminal, as in Figure 65.

Figure 66 shows a great rarity, the Scotch "thistle-shaped" measures. Though by no means an early type, these are extremely hard to find, very few examples being known to exist at the present time. It is presumed that they were condemned on account of the ease with which a portion of the spirits might be retained from each customer by not tilting them sufficiently to insure the complete emptying of their contents.

Figure 67 shows another very rare series of measures, known as Scotch "pot-bellied" measures, from Mrs. Carvick Webster's collection (as are also those in Figure 61 above). This set is quite unique and I should not know where to look for another set to illustrate. The name is anything but dignified, and, were it not for the fact that it is so generally accepted, one would attempt to create something a little less grating on one's feelings; but I am afraid it is too late.

Fig. 67 — Pot-Bellied Measures (*Scotch*)
A very rare series.

Figs. 68, 69 — English and Irish Measures
The first two are of a type peculiar to the neighborhood of Bristol, England. The third is an Irish "haystack."

Here we must revert to an English type for comparison with an Irish one. Figure 68 shows a very fine gallon measure of a type which, with slight variation, seems to have been confined to Bristol (England) and its district. Figure 69 shows a smaller one compared with an Irish "haystack" measure of which a set of six (half-gallon to half-noggin) are shown in Figure 70. The latter are from Mr. Clapperton's collection and Figures 68 and 69 are from Dr. Young's.

These haystack measures, which lay claim to no very great antiquity, are eagerly sought after, owing to their pleasing form; but they are very hard to obtain, especially in the larger sizes.

Figure 71 shows another type of Irish measure, of which four or five sizes are known. This shows a distinct relation to the baluster family, but is minus the handle and lid. No other use of the baluster shape in Ireland is recorded.

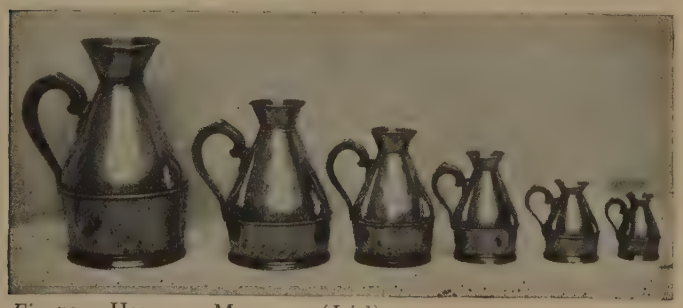


Fig. 70 — Haystack Measures (*Irish*)

Continental Types

Let us now consider a few European types, and first, those emanating from the Channel Islands. Figure 72 illustrates a series which were in use in Jersey, and Figure 73 the same type without lids. Those shown in Figure 74 emanate from Guernsey, and while similar in shape and detail to the others, have the added feature of bands around the body. These Channel Islands measures are

Fig. 71 — Irish Measure
Made without lid or handle.

Fig. 72 — Channel Islands Types

Fig. 73 — Channel Islands Types
These and the measures in Figure 72 are from Jersey.

generally of very pleasing design, well made, and of good metal. Frequently they bear the marks of London makers, though, as has already been stated, they were never used generally in England. They form, as it were, the connecting link between the English and the French types. Figure 72 shows pieces in the collection of Frank Creassey, Esq., Figure 73 in Mrs. Carvick Webster's, and Figure 74 in the collection of W. D. Thomson, Esq., of Birmingham, England.

Fig. 74 — Guernsey Types
Similar to Figures 72 and 73 but with bands around the body.

The next four illustrations show the French cylindrical styles. In Figure 75 the lid, it will be seen, rests *on* the sloping collar. In Figure 76 it falls *inside* the collar; whereas, in Figure 77, the collar has gone entirely and a raised lid has taken its place. Figure 78 shows the lidless variety of measure of this latter type. All these types were of quite good metal and well made.

Fig. 75 — French Measures

Fig. 79 —
Netherlands Measure

Figs. 76, 77 — French Measures

In Figure 79 is shown a lidded measure with a shell thumbpiece from the Netherlands. The variants of this form are, however, so numerous as to forbid anything approaching a detailed dissertation. But the one shown will do for all. Many of these are of exquisitely simple design and beautiful lines, carrying out precisely one's conception of what an all-round useful, and at the same time beautiful, jug ought to be.

Turning to Swiss pewter, Figure 80 shows two fine wine flagons from the district of Wallis and known as "Walliserkantli." Figure 84 shows one of these latter in actual use by a party of Swiss guides in native setting. Figure 81 shows a circular screw-topped wine can from the Zurich district, and Figure 82, an hexagonal screw-topped wine can from Schaffhausen and a beer mug from Central Switzerland.

Before leaving the subject of Swiss pewter I should like to illustrate a charming little group of that country's wares (*Fig. 83*). This photograph was sent to me before the World War by a very valued correspondent, Mr. Richard Wetter of Winterthur, Switzerland, from pieces in his own collection. From this little group will be seen what a great feature was made in Switzerland of rococo design, which spread even to the chocolate pots in the bottom row.

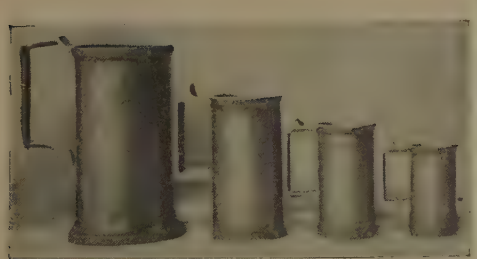


Fig. 78 — French Measures

Fig. 80 — Swiss "Walliserkantli"

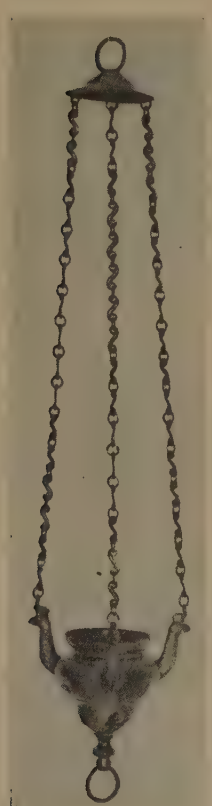
Figs. 81, 82 — Wine Cans and a Beer Mug (*Swiss*)

Fig. 83 — Swiss Pewter

The flagon, third from the left on the top row, is of the Bernese type and the fifth from the left is a "biberon" for children to drink from. It emanates from the Zurich district. The rest of the pieces would seem to need but little explanation, consisting mainly, as they do, of plates, salts, candlesticks, and soup-tureens of characteristic Swiss rococo patterns.

In Figure 85 is shown an urn of Dutch manufacture, made by G. Hendricks of Alkmaar. This piece is some twenty inches high and has three brass taps and a wooden knob on the lid. These pieces are still to be obtained and are always of Netherland origin: I cannot call to mind ever having seen one of any other nationality. Some of them are quite well made, but often the slender feet seem ill-adapted to carry the great weight of the vessels when full. Many o them have, in fact, collapsed in consequence of being over full.

Fig. 85 — Dutch Urn



Figs. 86 — Shrine Lamp
Continental, but of uncertain nationality.

Figures 87, 88 and 89 show three types of altar candlesticks for use in churches of the Roman Catholic faith on the continent of Europe. Figure 89, it will be noted, has images in relief of our Saviour and the Blessed Virgin, and the modelling of the pillar is very pleasing, though the same cannot be said for the base, which would have been improved by a wider spread of the foot, as in Figure 88, where the feeling of top-heaviness is less evident.

Figure 86 shows a very pleasing and graceful Continental shrine lamp, presented to the author by Charles G. J. Port, Esq., F.S.A., of Worthing. Its country of origin is obscure, some connoisseurs saying that it emanates from Spain, though I have yet to see a piece of Spanish pewter which is thoroughly authenticated.

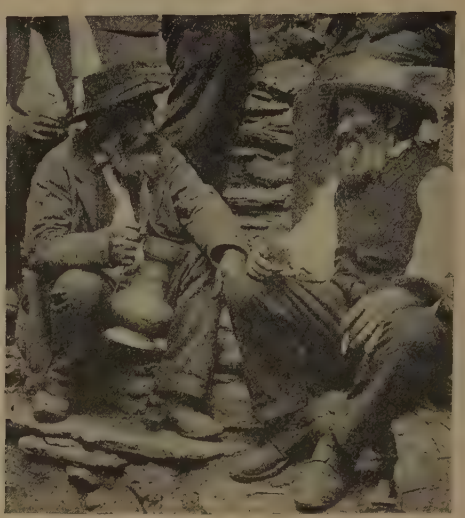


Fig. 84 — A Question of Taste
These Swiss guides seem more concerned with the flavor of the Kantli's content than with the shape of the vessel.

Note—The great number and variety of pewter measures of one kind and another illustrated in these articles serve to emphasize the fact that, until the nineteenth century, pewter was largely used for measuring both dry goods and liquids. Oil, wine, and beer, Massé* tells us, were the fluids most commonly measured in pewter vessels, which, because of their ability to stand rough handling, proved highly convenient. Some of the terms used to denote different measures will bear elucidation. Previous to 1707 one Scotch pint was the equivalent of three English pints. Half a Scotch pint was known as a *chopin*, which, in turn, consisted of two *mutchkins*, each equal to three English *gills*, though four Scotch gills were required to constitute a mutchkin. The English *quartern* is a quarter of a pint, *i.e.*, a gill. A *noggin* is likewise approximately a gill. This is usually associated, in literature at least, with spirituous liquors; the old toper's noggin of rum or gin representing about half an ordinary drinking glass.

**The Pewter Collector*, H. L. J. Massé, New York, 1921.

Figs. 87, 88, 89 — Continental Candlesticks

Chapter IV

Fig. 89a — Baptismal Basin (*Scotch*)
Dating from about 1800. Supported in its original wrought-iron bracket.

Ecclesiastical Pewter

IN the previous chapter I had a word to say concerning altar candlesticks and a shrine lamp. Other types of vessels devoted to sacred usage are the bénitier, or holy-water container; the baptismal basin; the flagon; the chalice; the paten, etc.; and we shall now proceed to consider a few of each type in the order named.

Bénitiers are found in a great variety of forms, but they are always surmounted by some sacred image or emblem. The water-container, as will be seen in Figures 91, 92 and 93, is at the base, above which appears, in some instances, the figure of our crucified Saviour, perhaps with figures of angels or cherubim at either side of the shaft of the cross. In other cases this figure is supplanted by the Blessed Virgin or by a representation of the Last Supper or by other similar motifs, in relief.

Bénitiers are made either to hang or to stand; and, more often than not, they do both. They are invariably of European workmanship, often crudely made; but occasionally are very beautiful in both their design and their workmanship. Owing to the weight of the container when full and to the fragile nature of the backs, they are seldom found unrepaired at the point where the upper-part joins the well.

The baptismal basin was in common use in Scotland, many examples still being in existence, some of them in their original setting. One of these I am fortunate in being able to illustrate here, in Figure 89a, supported in its original swinging wrought-iron bracket, which it was customary to affix either to wall or pulpit. The bowl itself bears the mark of Archibald & William Coats, who were Glasgow pewterers working round about the year 1800.

In Figure 90 are shown two mid-eighteenth century bowls of this type, the smaller one bearing, on the underside, the words "Sutton-Benger, 1761." It is evidently from the church in that village, though an enquiry which I made through the Vicar could elicit no definite information on this point. It is six and five-eighths inches in diameter and two and a quarter inches in depth (an unusually small size for this type), and bears the mark of Ash & Hutton of Bristol. Both these pieces are in the collection of Mrs. Carvick Webster.

The communion flagons used in England have varied considerably in shape from time to time, each type, broadly speaking, having obtained for a time and then been supplanted by what must have been regarded as "an improvement" in design. Looking backward, however, as we are now able to do, over the period of three and a quarter centuries, we are rather tempted to reverse that opinion and to range flagon designs in an ascending scale of ugliness. There are exceptions to this method, it is true, but *who* can prefer the ones shown in the later illustrations to those of earlier type?

In Scotland the shapes have remained more fixed, and deservedly so, for who can cavil at the form of any of the three which I illustrate (*Figs. 94, 96* and *97*)?

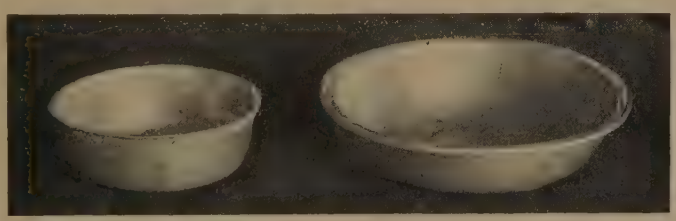


Fig. 90 — Baptismal Basins

Figs. 91, 92, 93 — Bénitiers
While occurring in a great variety of forms, these holy-water basins are always surmounted by a sacred emblem.

Figs. 94 and 95 — Communion Flagons
The example at the left is Scotch, that to the right is Irish—the only type definitely assignable to that country.

Each makes its own appeal to the imagination, and in none is extraneous ornament "dragged" in to the detriment of beauty of line.

Of Irish flagons but one definite type is known, and I illustrate the example in Figure 95. It has been found both with and without a lid and is of a fine, bold type, reminiscent of the English flagon shown in the centre of Figure 101, but bearing the more modern adornment of the encircling bands around the body. The English one is about a century earlier.

Fig. 96 — COMMUNION FLAGON (*Scotch*)
Late seventeenth century type.

Fig. 97 — COMMUNION FLAGON (*Scotch*)
Eighteenth and nineteenth century type.

This Irish example bears the mark of Roger Ford, who, in 1752, was in business in Cook Street, Dublin. It is one of a pair which now find sanctuary in the collection of Francis Weston, Esq., F.S.A., of Croydon.

Figure 96 shows an early type of Scottish communion flagon which, as will have been observed in the course of previous chapters, was also in use for domestic purposes. A pair of this exceedingly rare type are in Brechin Cathedral, bearing the date 1680.

Following this, and for some little time coeval with it, came the slightly tapering cylindrical flagon with very slightly domed circular lid shown in Figure 97, a type which remained in general use for at least a century and a half and is by no means obsolete today. Mr. Port has one bearing the date 1702 and with the slightly projecting point on the front of the lid, which was a feature of the earlier ones of this type; and I have come across many bearing marks of nineteenth century pewterers.

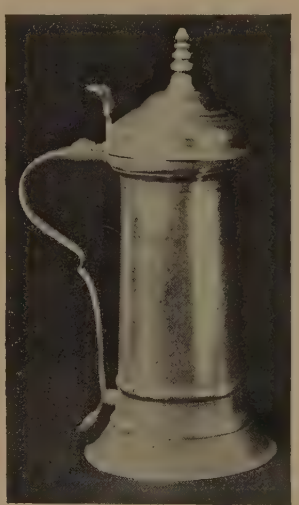


Fig. 98 — COMMUNION FLAGON (*English*)
Unique example. Second hal. of seventeenth century.

This last variety was to a certain extent supplanted by the elegant flagon illustrated in Figure 94, a vessel full of dignity in every line and comparing more than favourably with the English examples of about the same period. This piece, some thirteen inches in height, is in the collection of Major John Richardson, D. S. O., of Falmouth, and bears the touch of Graham & Wardrop, Glasgow pewterers of about 1790–1800; but it has all the bearing of an early eighteenth century model.

I will now, as briefly as may be, illustrate the characteristic types of English flagons, the earliest of which, *circa* 1600, is shown in Figure 99. This magnificent example is, or was until quite recently, in its original place in Combmartin Church, Devonshire. How beautifully it illustrates the simplicity of the earlier pewter! How eminently suited to withstand hard usage and the ravages of time! Let us hope that it may never be permitted to leave the sacred fane which has sheltered it through these three and a quarter centuries, during which long period of time how many a stalwart son of Devon must have received strength and courage from its life-giving contents!

Next in point of age, *circa* 1650, is the one shown in Figure 100, also from the collection of Major Richardson. This piece resembles the foregoing in its main characteristics, but already displays the pewterer's growing tendency to depart from the simple lines of his forebears.

Figure 101 shows three fine flagons from the Carvick Webster collection, the centre one bearing, on the handle, one of the earliest marks recorded on the existing touch plates of the Pewterers' Company of London, being

Fig 99 — COMMUNION FLAGON (*English*)
Early seventeenth century.

Fig. 100 — COMMUNION FLAGON (*English*)
Mid-seventeenth century.

Fig. 101 — COMMUNION FLAGONS (*English*)
Seventeenth century types.

Fig. 102—"York" Communion Flagon
That to the left is dated 1725 and bears an inscription of which a rubbing is shown in Figure 103.

Fig. 103

coeval with the foregoing; whereas the two larger ones must be considered a decade or so later in date.

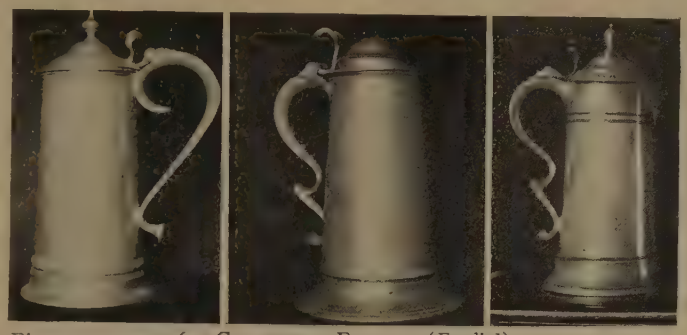
Another fine flagon from Major Richardson's collection appears in Figure 98. As a type this is quite unique; but, from its general form, we know it to be of the second half of the seventeenth century.

Following this we come to another beautiful and extremely rare type, which has come to be known as the "York" flagon, Figure 102. Of this I do not know of more than ten in existence. Both these examples are in the Carvick Webster collection and, in my opinion, the one on the left-hand side of the illustration, with its fine inscription, dated 1725 (of which a rubbing is given in Figure 103) is one of the finest examples of the pewterer's art which has come down to our time.

The evolution in form through the eighteenth century is well shown in the six illustrations which follow.

Figure 104 displays a type of quite pleasing shape in itself, but it already shows the beginning of that decadence in form which was shortly to dominate this type of vessel. The date of this piece is *c.* 1725, and that of Figures 105 and 106, *c.* 1735 and 1750 respectively. All are from the collection of Mr. Walter Churcher.

The introduction of the double handle about this time should be noted; another step which, even though of utility, is certainly not one of beauty. The alteration of the shape in this way was made to permit of the more convenient handling of the vessel according to the amount of fluid which it contained, the lower half giving a better control over the balance when the vessel was becoming emptied. Figures 107 and 108, both *c.* 1745, show this innovation in its best form, the former piece being in the collection of Major John Thompson, D.S.O., and the latter in the de Navarro collection,—the latter an exceptionally fine and graceful flagon for this type and period.



Figs. 104, 105, 106—Communion Flagons (*English*)
Dating respectively, from left to right, 1725, 1735, and 1750 (or thereabouts) these flagons illustrate a changing taste.

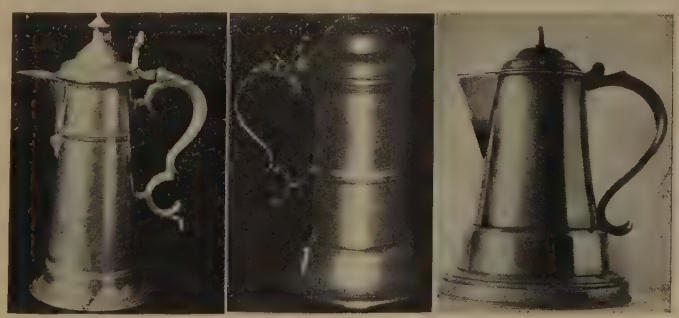
Figs. 107 and 108—Communion Flagons (*English*)
Both from the mid-eighteenth century, and both excellently exemplifying the use of the double handle.

Figure 109 (and again I have laid Major Richardson's collection under contribution) illustrates a type in vogue from *c.* 1775–1810. This particular example is one of the earlier ones of its type and of fine metal, but shuns comparison with its Scotch contemporary shown in Figure 94. To close the series, I illustrate two examples which alone are sufficient to demonstrate that decline of artistic feeling in designing these vessels to which reference has already been made. Figure 110 (again from the Richardson collection) and Figure 111, are beyond comment, except to say that the former is of a date *c.* 1800 and the latter, which bears the mark of Watts & Harton of London, is *c.* 1825.

* * *

Turning our attention to chalices, we are face to face with one of the very rarest of English pewter vessels. Cherished as they have ever been, even in their disuse, on account of their sacred associations, and likely to be the more so in the future in view of the insistent demands of recent years for their retention in their original churches, they will, as the years go by, become, as is only seemly, more difficult of acquisition by collectors.

Figure 112 illustrates one of the rarest of all kinds, a sepulchral chalice, now in the collection of Lewis Clapperton, Esq. In the Middle Ages it was the custom to bury these and other symbols of their office with deceased ecclesiastics; and, very occasionally, when turning up old ground on the site of forgotten burying places, these



Figs. 109, 110, 111—Communion Flagons (*English*)
From late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, a progressive decline.

Fig. 112 — Sepulchral Chalice

relics are unearthed. The one here shown was brought to light in Lincolnshire. Needless to say it is of pewter: but these pieces are usually in such a fragile and crumbling state that they require to be kept in a specially constructed air-tight case after some preservative has been applied to prevent further disintegration.

From the same collection, Figure 117 shows a most interesting little pocket communion set in folding carved wooden case, from Iceland. It is quite unique. Again from this collection is illustrated, Figure 113, a series of chalices mostly Scottish, and of the latter half of the eighteenth or the first quarter of the nineteenth

Figs. 115 and 116 — Chalices
The first English, the second Scotch; both eighteenth century.

Fig. 113 — Communion Chalices
Except for the middle piece in the lower row, these are mainly late eighteenth and early nineteenth century examples.

century. The short-stemmed one in the centre, bottom row, however, is of a considerably earlier date. In Figure 114 is shown a mid-seventeenth century English chalice which bears one of the earliest marks on the existing London touchplates and is in the collection of Dr. Young, of Manchester. An identical example is in the de Navarro collection. One of a pair of fine English chalices in the collection of Major Thompson (*tempus* 1745) is illustrated in Figure 115. Two more Scotch examples of the 1760 period are shown in Figures 116 and 118, the former bearing the date 1762 in the inscription. A late eighteenth century English chalice from the de Navarro collection is illustrated in Figure 120, whilst its Scotch contemporary, from the collection of Dr. Young, appears in Figure 119.

Fig. 114 — Chalice (*English*)
Mid-seventeenth century.

Patens again, and for a similar reason, are a great rarity. It will be seen that a small one rests on the last-named chalice; and in Figure 123 I give an illustration of a most charming example from the collection of Walter Churcher, Esq. This fine little piece, which has a beautifully cabled moulding around its

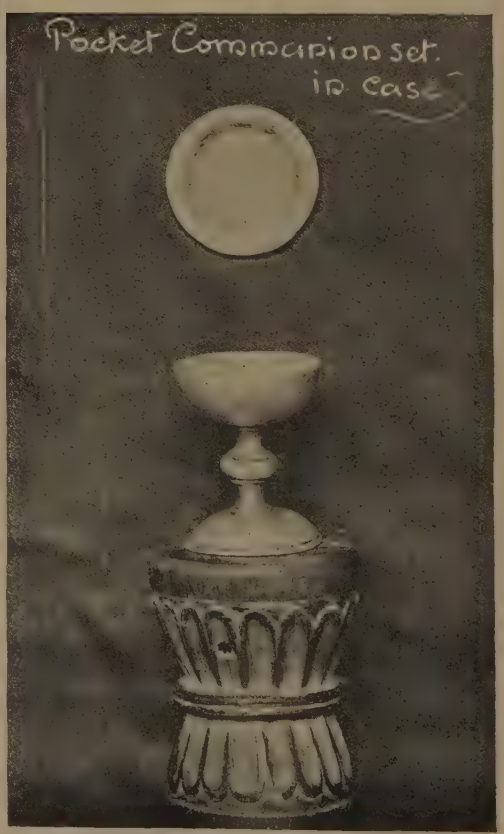


Fig. 117 — Pocket Communion Set

Fig. 118 — CHALICE

upper edge, bears the same mark as the chalice referred to under Figure 114. Its total width is but seven and one-eighth inches, whereas it has a rim one and a half inches in width, which gives it a great dignity of proportion and makes it a very desirable possession, a point fully appreciated by its present genial owner.

Figures 121 and 122 show the upper and under sides respectively of two types of paten-plates* or tazza-plates, both of which are from examples in the Churcher collection. The one with the beaded decoration around the rim, foot, and joining of foot and body, is of the William and Mary period; and the plainer one is some twenty to twenty-five years later.

Fig. 119 — CHALICE

In this and in Figure 117 observe the decorative effect of handsome lettering well placed. The chalice is here shown surmounted by a small paten.

These pieces, which are by no means common and are very eagerly sought for by collectors, seem to be a kind of natural dividing line between ecclesiastical pewter on the one hand, and domestic on the other; and, more often than not, it is extremely difficult to know whether or not a piece should be classed as the one or the other. In case of doubt, however, it is always more honest of purpose to designate it as domestic than to weave around it a false halo of sacred association for the sake of creating an interest which the particular piece has never, and will never, deserve.

* * *

Returning to domestic pewter, we will first give a thought or two to the various types of dishes and plates. Here let it be understood that the terms are not synonymous, as so many would seem to believe, from the frequency with which they are confounded. The plate, or trencher, was something less than ten inches in diameter. From it the food was actually consumed. On the larger dishes, or chargers, the various viands were carried to the dining-table. This distinction is worth remembering as I know from personal experience, from a situation in which I once found myself. A friend, who shall be nameless, once asked me if I could obtain for him a few good ordinary *plates* to serve as background for smaller pieces. I procured a few for him only to discover that it was not plates which he required at all, but large dishes!

But the details of domestic pewter I shall have to reserve for another chapter.

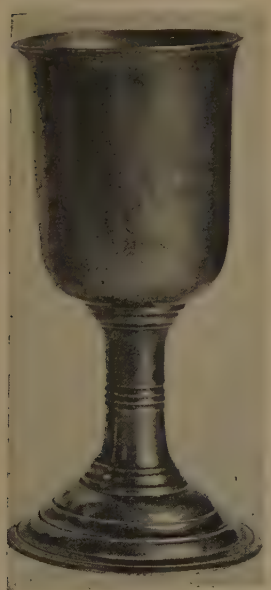


Fig. 120 — CHALICE

*The paten is an elevated plate upon which is placed the Communion bread. The paten was sometimes made to fit the chalice, as a cover.

Figs. 121 and 122 — PATENS

Upper picture illustrates two examples, which below are exhibited in reverse. The more richly decorated of the two is of the William and Mary period.

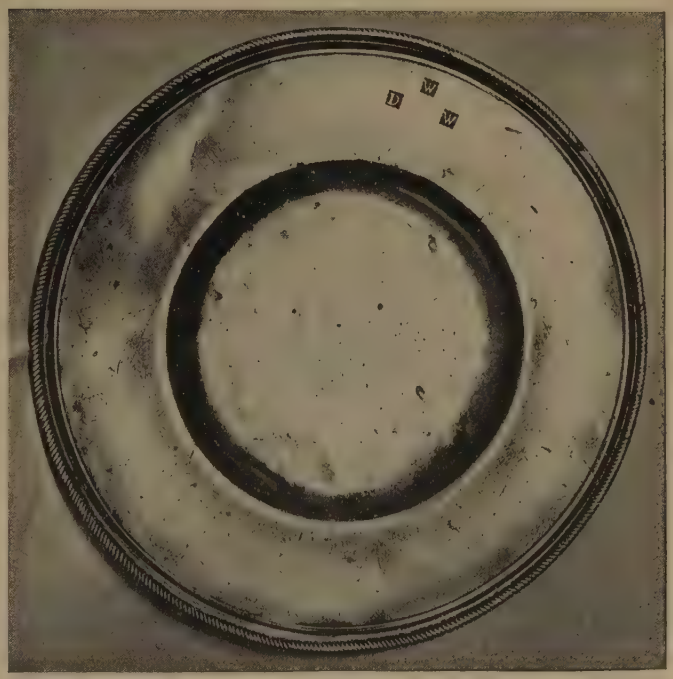
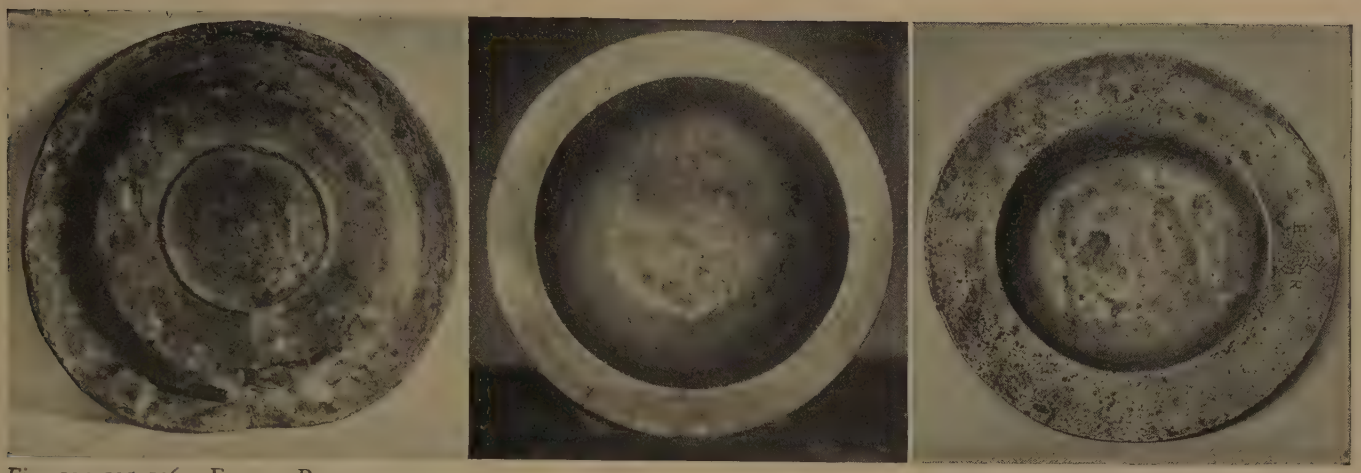


Fig. 123 — PATEN

The wide rim gives this diminutive piece an unusual dignity of proportion. The cabled moulding suggests fine silver work.

Plate IV — Plate (*English, 1661*)

One of a pair, the other of which appears on page 41. These are two of the finest plates in existence, and are part of a set of which each was engraved with a different device and initials, but all with the same date. *Owned by S. M. Lennox.*



Figs. 124, 125, 126 — ENGLISH PEWTER
The first is the type of Roman pewter used during the occupation of Britain, the second is a Tudor period dish from a sunken Spanish galleon, and the third an English Tudor piece.

Chapter V

Plates and Dishes

TO proceed with the story. Commencing at the beginning—and here let it be understood that all the plates and dishes which follow are English unless otherwise stated—the under side of a fine Roman dish, unearthed at Sutton, during excavations, is illustrated in Figure 124, from the Charbonnier collection. As will be seen, it is in a state of very advanced corrosion, which, at the base, has resulted in total disintegration, evidenced by the two large holes which appear there. It is, however, a fine example of the type of pewter dish in use at the time of the Roman occupation of Britain and corroborates, in its main details, similar specimens which have come to light in other parts of the country, from time to time. A noticeable feature is the raised strengthening bead which runs around the under side of the well, roughly midway between the centre point and the bouge.

Between this and Tudor pewter, two specimens of which are illustrated in Figures 125 and 126, there is a great hiatus. Indeed, apart from the records of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers of London and such medieval items as the sepulchral chalice already described under Figure 112, one may say frankly that very little information is available. But a very authentic piece of the Tudor period is shown in the small soup-plate, Figure 125, which was recovered from the Spanish Armada galleon sunk in Tobermory Bay, off the coast of Scotland, and now occupies an honored niche in the pewter room of Antonio de Navarro, Esq. Considering its long immersion—for three and a quarter centuries—it is in a wonderful state of preservation.

Figure 126 shows another fine little plate which, though not so well authenticated as the last, may well be of an even earlier date. This piece bears on the front of the rim, which is quite distinct in the photograph, a Tudor

Figs. 127, 128, 129 — ENGLISH PEWTER
The first two are seventeenth-century plates, the third a rose-water dish of similar period.

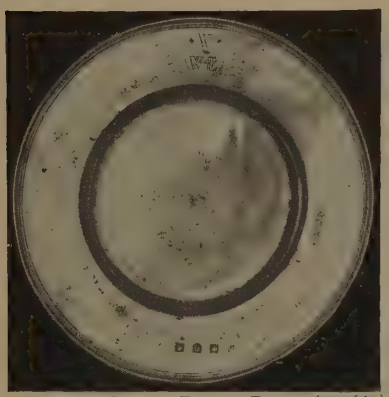


Fig. 130 — STUART PERIOD PLATE (*c. 1660*)
Observe the broad rim and the character of the engraving. By William Matthews (*d. 1689*).

plate some eight and three-quarters inches in diameter and marked on the rim with an unknown maker's mark, immediately above which, and as part of it, appears the date 1621.

A similar type, but of slightly later date, is illustrated in Figure 128, and this is rendered the more interesting by reason of the wriggled work rose-and-bird design with which it is decorated, a species of ornamentation specially sought for by the collector of discrimination.

A rose-water dish, of about the same period, from the collection of Mr. Walter Churcher, is shown in Figure 129. This piece must have spent the better part of its days in a very good home, for it is in a wonderfully well-preserved condition, a condition which one knows will suffer nothing at the hands of its present careful owner.

Figure 130 represents an extremely beautiful plate of the Stuart broad-rimmed type. Some nine and three-eighths of an inch in diameter with a rim one and three-quarters of an inch in width, this fine plate was presented to me, as a memento of my first visit to his beautiful Worcestershire home, by Antonio de Navarro, Esq. It is one of the very rarest types of English pewter plates, a fact which enhances a hundredfold both the generosity of the giver and the pleasure of its present owner. It bears on the back of the rim the touch of William Matthews, who died in 1689. How long it was made before that time it is impossible to say, but probably between 1660 and 1670. Very few authentic examples of English *plates* of this type are known, though its prototypes in the "dish" sizes, whilst still rare, are far easier to obtain.

Fig. 133 — NARROW RIMMED TYPE

A fine example of the dish of this type is illustrated in Figure 131, between two plates of a slightly later type of which I shall have occasion to speak immediately, all of which pieces are in the Richardson collection. The dignity of proportion of these two latter types has never been equalled in any of the many

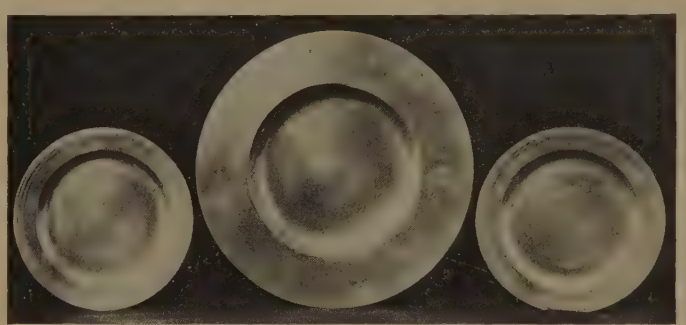


Fig. 131 — BROAD RIMMED DISH AND PLATES
A fine dignity of proportion between bowl and rim of the central piece is here obtained. The other two examples are slightly later.

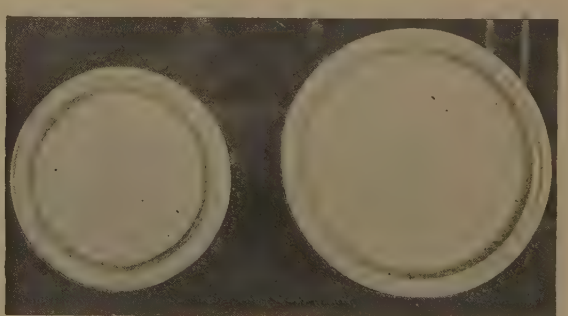
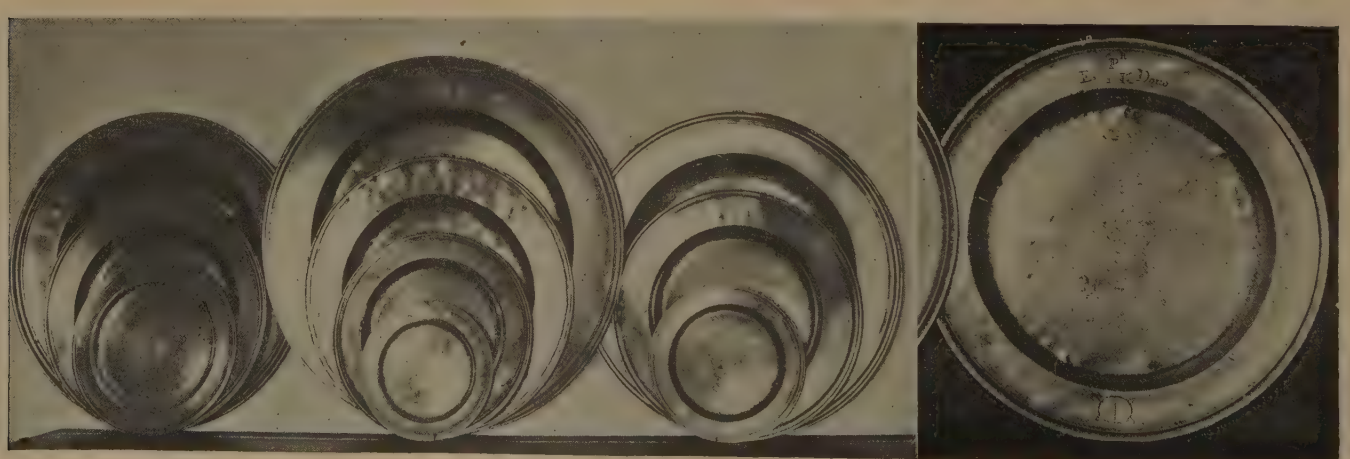
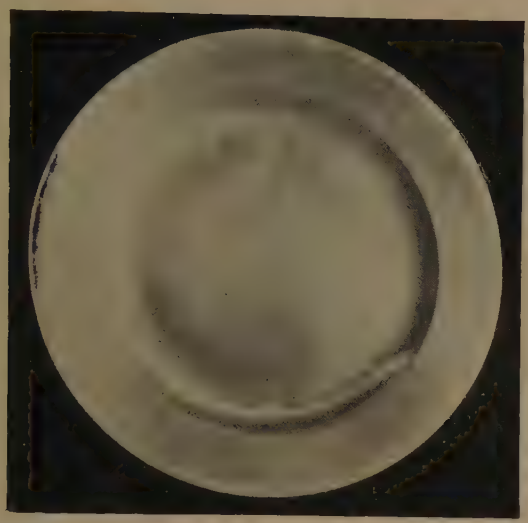


Fig. 132 — NARROW RIMMED TYPES
Rims reeded and but ¾ inch wide as against 1¾ in the broader type.



Figs. 134, 135 — ENGLISH PEWTER
The first group shows medium rims and reeded edges, the last plate has a single reeded edge, which was in full favor until about 1750.



Figs. 136. — Plain Rim Above with Reinforcing Reed Underneath
A type which succeeded the piece shown in Figure 135.

changes which have been rung on the pewter plates and dishes of bygone years. In both the dish and plate sizes these are eagerly sought for by many collectors.

As if to contrast with these beautiful proportions, in the succeeding type the width of the rim had dwindled to a matter of five-eighths or three-quarters of an inch in the plate size, as against the one and three-quarters of its predecessor, and though, in the narrowed type, the rim is by no means displeasing, it fails to impress one as did its predecessor. Two of this narrow-rimmed type, which also is very rare, are shown in Figure 132, wherein it will be seen that the rim is practically devoid of any flatness, but is made up of a series of reedings. A variant of this type is illustrated in Figure 133, bearing the mark of a Bristol maker.

The three last pieces are all in the collection of Mrs. Carvick Webster, as also are those in Figure 134, which shows an unique series of the reeded edge type which was coeval with the last, and which eventually it outlived by a decade. Two others of this type have previously appeared in Figure 131. This fine series shows practically

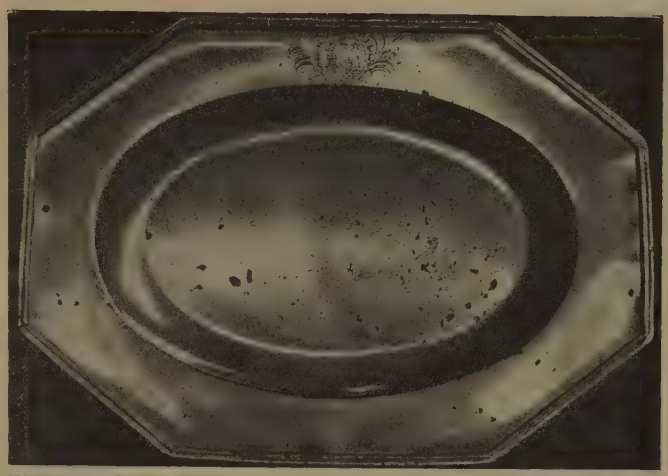
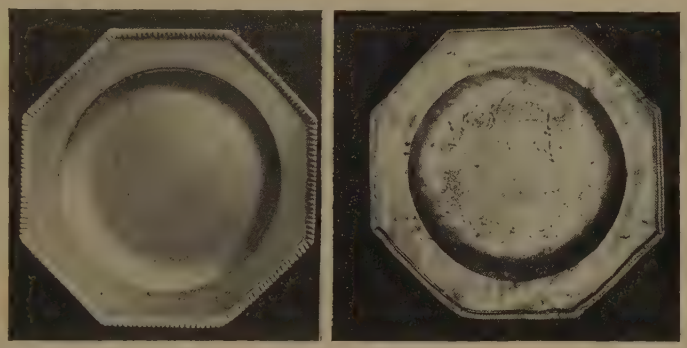


Fig. 137 — Octagonal Dish (*c. 1750*)
By Thos. Chamberlain. The arms are those of David Garrick.

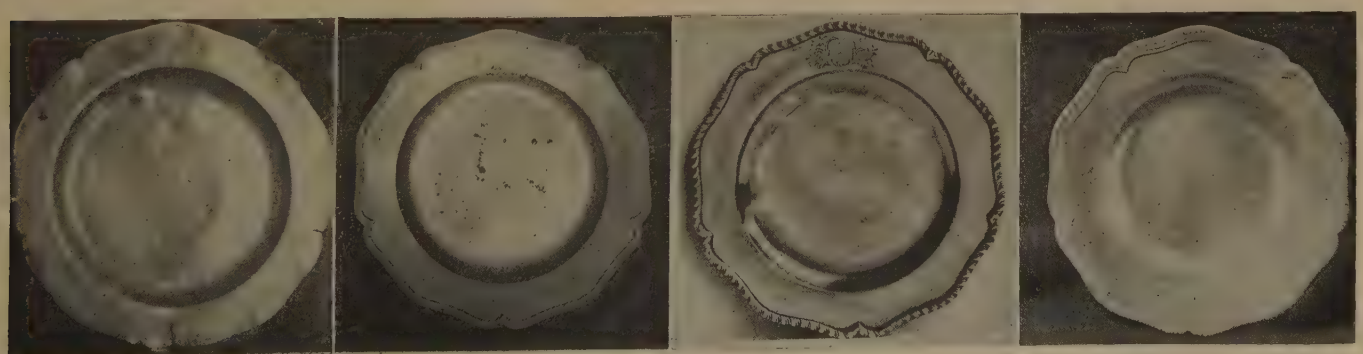
every known size, from eight and a half to twenty-five inches, the latter being an exceptionally fine example of craftsmanship and of fine, resonant metal, bearing the same Bristol maker's mark as appears on the narrow-rimmed one in Figure 133 above.



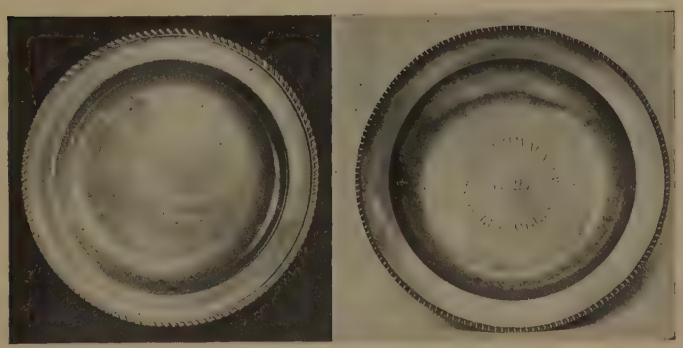
Figs. 138, 139 — Octagonal Plates
The first, with a beaded edge, is by Thos. Scattergood (*1736–1775*); the second, whose edge has an inner beading, is by Richard Pitt (*c. 1760*).

Side by side with the foregoing, during the last ten years of its popularity, the single reeded type, shown in Figure 135, had struggled for pride of place, which it finally obtained, to remain in public favour until *c.* 1750, when it was, in turn, supplanted, after a fight of some twenty years' duration, by plates the rim of which was quite plain on the upper side, Figure 136, but with a strengthening reed some quarter of an inch broad on the under side, which somewhat resembles the preceding type turned upside down.

This plain, narrowish rim maintained its popularity, shared from time to time by the many types of decorated rims of which I shall shortly speak, until the pewterers were forced to bow their heads in admission of defeat, in face of the advancing wave of enthusiasm for the work of



Figs. 140, 141, 142, 143 — Five-Lobed Plates
The first, by Chamberlain; the second, with reeded edge, by Spackman (*c. 1780*); the third, with gadrooned edge, by James Tisoe (*c. 1760*); the last, a gadrooned edge with inner fillets.



Figs. 144, 145 — Round Plates (*early nineteenth century*)
Plain gadrooned edges.

the potters, who, with their more sanitary and more easily cleaned china platters and bowls, caught the public taste and ultimately gave the *coup-de-grace* to an industry which had existed and flourished for century after century as an integral part of the national life—*Sic transit gloria mundi*——!

Of the decorated rims referred to above, Figure 137 shows one of the ovate-octagonal dishes from a service formerly used by, and bearing the arms of, David Garrick, the world-famed actor. This dish, now in the de Navarro collection, bears the mark of Thomas Chamberlain of London (*c. 1750*), and is in a good state of preservation.

In the same collection is a series of octagonal plates with beaded edges, one of which is shown in Figure 138, and upon these plates appears the touch of Thos. Scattergood, junior, of London, who was at work from about 1736–1775.

Another octagonal plate, and the only one of its type which I have ever seen with the very pleasing inner row of small raised beads, and which bears the mark of Richard Pitt of London (*c. 1760*), is illustrated in Figure 139 and is in the Carvick Webster collection. It has the appearance of being considerably older than its mark will permit.

In Figure 140 is shown a plain five-lobed wavy-edged plate of very pleasing proportions, by the same maker as the David Garrick dish referred to above; and a similar plate, but with reeded edge, by Spackman of London (*c. 1780*), is illustrated in Figure 141, this latter a type of very frequent occurrence in Continental pewter plates. The last two pieces illustrated are also in the collection of Mrs. Carvick Webster.

Figure 142, from the W. D. Thomson collection, made by James Tisoe of London (*c. 1760*), shows this same type of five-lobed plate, but with a plain gadrooned border; whilst, in Figure 143, is a similar plate, but with the pleasing addition of the two narrow fillets running around inside the gadrooning. This latter, from the Richardson collection, is another fine example of the pewterer's art.

Of ordinary round plates with plain gadrooned edging, two excellent examples are shown in Figures 144 and 145, each from a set of six in the Carvick Webster collection.

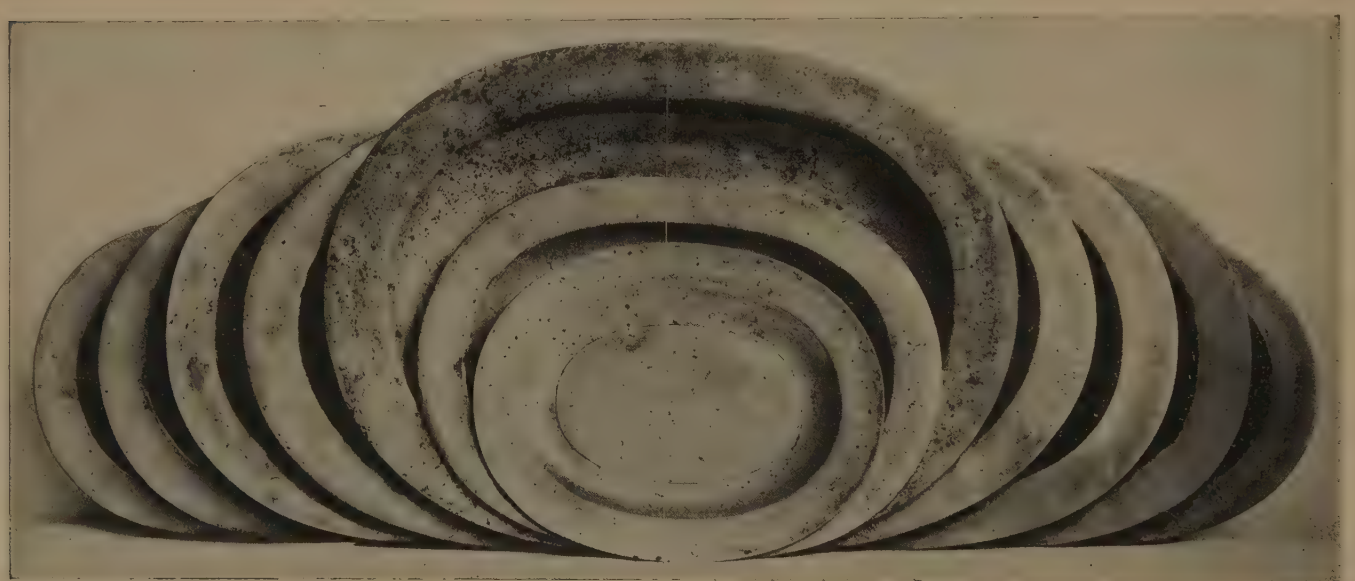
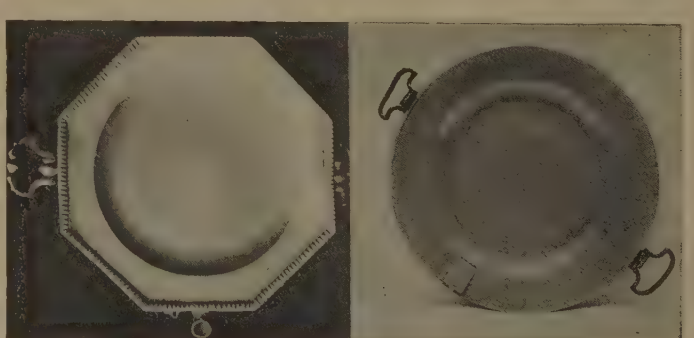


Fig. 146 — Oval Dishes
These do not appear before the mid-eighteenth century. They are by Samuel Duncomb (*c. 1780*).

The plain one is some thirty years older than the engraved one, which, as it will be seen, is engraved, *St. Peter's Church, Walworth, Surry, 1827*, where these pieces were formerly in use as offertory plates.

A fine series of plain oval dishes is illustrated from the collection of W. D. Thomson, Esq., in Figure 146. The oval



Figs. 146a, 147 — Hot Water Plates
The second is by John Carpenter (*c. 1750*).

Fig. 148 — French Pewter Plates
A beautiful type, not elsewhere produced. The measure is Flemish.

dish did not come into use before the middle of the eighteenth century, and the series illustrated are of the period (*c. 1780*), bearing the mark of Samuel Duncomb of Birmingham.

To round off the series, and the story could not be complete without some reference to them, I illustrate two hot water plates in Figures 146*a* and 147. The former, *en suite* with the plate shown in Figure 138, is in the de Navarro collection; and the latter, of the type familiar to all collectors, is in the collection of Thomas Warburton, Esq., of Manchester, and bears the mark of John Carpenter of London (*c. 1750*).

These hot water dishes and plates would seem to have come into use about the same period as the oval shape in dishes, both being innovations which must at the time have been looked upon as very sensible and most welcome improvements. They were made in almost every conceivable shape and form: with fixed or loose tops; with rigid

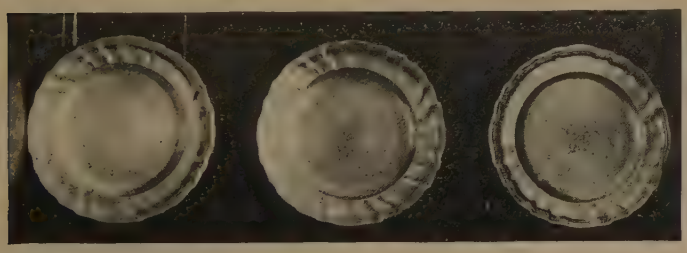


Fig. 149 — Swiss Pewter
These have no counterpart in American or British pewter.

or drop handles; with and without rims; with plain perpendicular sides or those of moulded section and with a hundred variations of mouldings; and all seem still to have a strong attraction for the public taste, for one often finds, even in the houses of non-collectors, a few examples of this type of pewter, for decorative purposes.

We have now glanced at most of the better-known English types, some of which were also in use on the continent of Europe; these latter, however, are usually of softer and much inferior metal, without the hammer marks on the underside, and should cause but little trouble to the beginner if he will but apply the tests enumerated in the first chapter of this book, some of which will, in the majority of cases, be found to give the deciding word as to the locality of origin.

Turning to these Continental examples, I give in Figure 148 a representation of two very beautiful French plates, of types which have no counterpart in other countries. The larger one of the two, as is also the lidded Bruges measure, is in the Churcher collection. The smaller was in the collection of the late Alban L. G. Distin, but with his other pieces was sold at the time of his death.

Figure 150 shows a type of plate which has been very freely faked to trap the uninitiated who somehow seem to be irresistibly attracted by the French Royal badge of the Salamander beneath a crown in repoussé in the centre, and the field *semée de Lys*. Heraldry and pewter have seemed ever to go hand in hand, both being complemen-

Fig. 150 — French Pewter Plate
A design frequently imitated.

tary to life in the Middle Ages; so perhaps it is not altogether surprising that plates of this kind should stir the imagination and unfold before the mind pictures of the baronial hall, the good old days and scenes of revelry.

In Figures 149 and 151, are illustrated various types of eighteenth century Swiss plates and dishes, the former having no counterpart in American or British pewter, whilst the latter examples closely resemble the one shown in Figure 141.

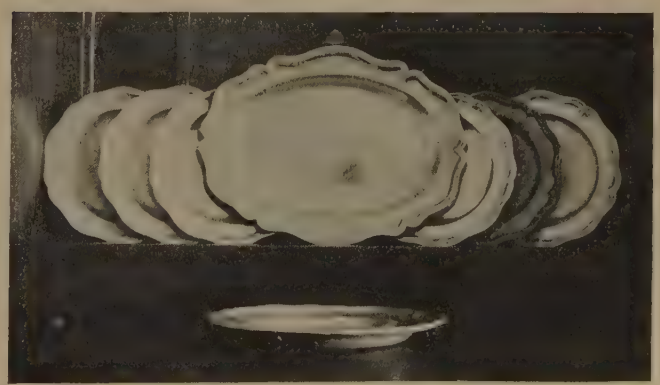


Fig. 151 — Swiss Pewter
Similar to the plate shown in Figure 141.

Fig. 151a — PEWTER TIME-LAMP

Candlesticks and Lamps

These notes could never claim even a modicum of completeness without some reference to those less showy, but equally indispensable, articles which were of daily utility in the environment of our ancestors. Perhaps one of the next in importance was the candlestick. When we think of the present-day facilities for lighting our homes, it fills us with wonder how our grandparents "existed" after dark! No wonder "early to bed" was the cry instilled into the youthful ears, and had I been foredoomed to spend my childish winter evenings trying to read, write, or work by the dim, uncertain, flickering light of a rushlight or tallow-candle, I, too, should very willingly and very soon have learned to submit to that slogan, *not* through *force majeure* but of my own untrammelled, free will; for it must have been a *real joy* to go to bed!

Fig. 152 — CANDLESTICK
A very handsome early example of the pricket type.

Having thus, at any rate to my own satisfaction, laid this spectre of my early days, let us give a moment's thought to such of the lighting devices as come within the purview of our subject; for, with the rush light holder, which was an iron pliers-like device on a tripod or other form of stand, we have nothing to do, since it was never made in pewter. But oil time-lamps were at one time in more or less general use on the continent of Europe, and one of them is illustrated in Figure 151a. The glass container at the top, which screws on, was filled with sperm or similar heavy-bodied oil, the wick lying in the horizontal arm with one end in the oil at the bottom of the glass container, the other end being left free for lighting at the outer end of the arm. When lighted, the oil gradually descended in the container as it was burned away, its descent recording the time on a bar of pewter running down the front, which was graduated in hours. Of course, the lamp had to be lighted at the time shown on this bar when it was freshly filled, an operation which necessitated some little practice in order to fill it exactly to the time desired and which would, of course, vary according to the time of the year; for, whereas in the winter it would be necessary to light up about four o'clock, in the summer it would not be required until about eight-thirty or nine o'clock, even if at all. These lamps burned with quite passable accuracy, for I once allowed one to burn by my bedside throughout the night and in the morning it was roughly correct. I forget now whether it gained or lost a few minutes, but it matters not, for we shall not be using these contrivances again in this twentieth century!

Of English candlesticks, Figure 152 shows a very beautiful early example which was dug up in Thames Street, London, and was for some time in the collection of the late F. G. Hilton-Price, Director of the Society of Antiquaries of London, but which, at his death, passed into the care of its present owner, Lewis Clapperton, Esq., of Glasgow. As will be seen, it is of the pricket variety, but on account of its being quite unique in design we have nothing to guide us as to its date. It is evidently very early, and is in wonderfully fine condition considering where it was found.

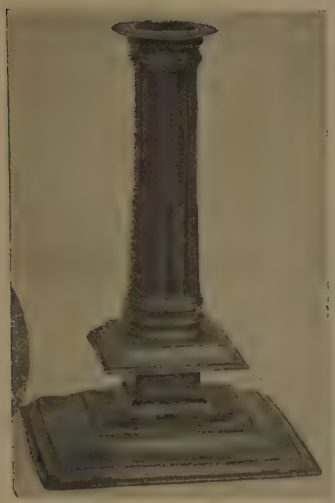
In the same collection is the one illustrated in Figure 153, another extremely fine piece, probably of early seventeenth century workmanship, and again almost unique in type, this bell-shaped base being very eagerly sought for, but very seldom found.

Fig. 153 — CANDLESTICK — (*Probably seventeenth century*)
A rare type with bell-shaped base.

Figure 154 illustrates a type which, to the writer, seems to speak of the severe days of the Commonwealth, but which to other authorities appears a little later; but this is a point which I am afraid will never be finally settled because the marks, when such exist, are generally merely the initials of the maker's name and are not struck upon the touchplates. In the absence of absolute proof to the contrary, I am afraid that these will continue to suggest to my mind more than a nodding acquaintance with Oliver Cromwell or his times.

In Figures 155 and 156 we have two very fine examples of the extremely rare, later Jacobean candlesticks so eagerly sought by collectors. The former is in the Carvick Webster, and the latter in the Walter Churcher collection. Considering how numerous these candlesticks must have

Fig. 154 — CANDLESTICK
Probably Cromwellian.



Figs. 155, 156 — CANDLESTICKS
Rare late Jacobean types. The former is strongly impregnated with classic feeling.

been at one time, it is amazing that so few have come down to our time to rejoice the hearts of collectors.

The next stage in progression is shown by the two wonderful examples, from the de Navarro collection, in Figures 157 and 158. This latest type of Jacobean candlestick, which would seem to represent the zenith of the pewterer's art, is also one of extreme rarity, for not more than half a dozen are known to have come down to our time. One of these (I think it was during the month of February, 1923) was sold at auction for £41, and its present owner considered himself fortunate to obtain it at that price, for it is in perfect condition and of somewhat plainer style than those here illustrated. The one shown in Figure 157 is three and five-eighths inches in height and that in Figure 158, eight and five-eighths inches.

Figs. 157, 158 — CANDLESTICKS
Rare late Jacobean types.

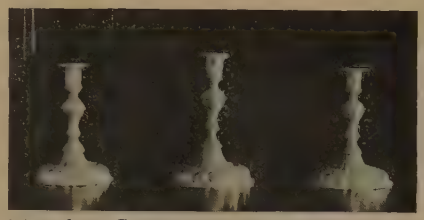


Fig. 162 — CANDLESTICKS
Swiss rococo.

Through the reigns of William and Mary and Queen Anne, the types remained much the same, but gradually evolved into a plainer style of stem until the early mid-Georgian days, when the Adam style of pillar candlestick had a slight vogue. One cannot find that this type ever had great hold on the pewterers, for few examples are known to exist in pewter.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the style known as the baluster stem came into fairly general use. It consists of, usually, a rounded base with a stem made up of a series of knops and pear-shaped sections, the assembling of which, in some specimens, is by no means displeasing; but the great majority bear no comparison with the types enumerated above and may but be classed as very ordinary. Figures 159 and 160 show a few of these types, whilst, in Figure 161, is shown a later type in vogue about 1825 to 1850.

In Figure 162 are shown three Swiss examples, formed in the elaborate, but by no means displeasing, rococo style which one has come instinctively to associate with Switzerland, though to a certain extent it obtained also in certain districts of France.

Figs. 159, 160, 161 — BALUSTER STEM CANDLESTICKS
The first five are late eighteenth century; the others a little later (*c. 1825–1850*).

Plate V — Pair of Flagons (*English, 1634*)

These flagons are engraved "1634. St. Marye, Northgate, Thomas Gilbert and William Wootton, Church Wardens, Decemb. 13th."
Owned by E. W. Turner.

Chapter VI

Footed Cups

A VERY brief résumé of English tankards was given under Figures 44 to 48. I should like to handle it more thoroughly, but space forbids. This is not a treatise on drinking vessels only. Yet these conveyers of refreshment constitute a topic at once so

Fig. 162a — Footed Cups (*early nineteenth century*)

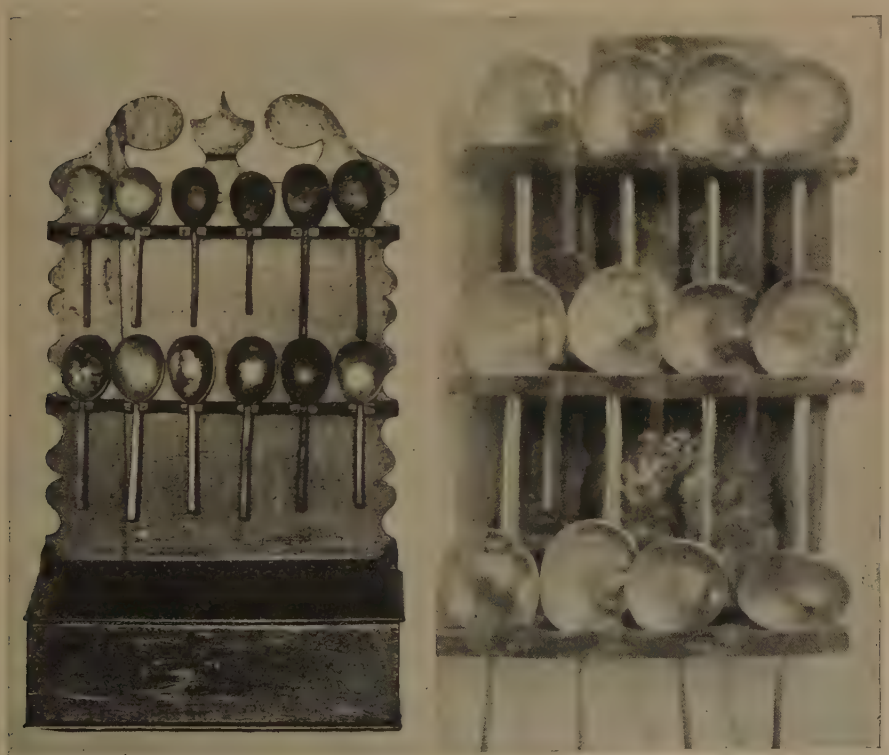
fascinating and so extensive that before leaving it I must illustrate a type of drinking vessel which comes not under the heading of tankards but is known as a footed cup. Very similar to the chalice but, possibly designedly so, shorter in the stem than the majority of these latter vessels, a fine array is shown in Figure 162*a*, from the Churcher collection. This type of cup was very much *de rigeur* in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Spoons

Of pewter spoons there is a great variety of types, but space again forbids my doing more than lightly touch upon the subject which has been made a distinct branch of collecting by the late Mr. Hilton Price in his charming little monograph *Old Base Metal Spoons*, a book which should be in the hands of every collector of such bijouterie.

In Figure 163 is illustrated an old English rack

Figs. 165, 166 — Spoons
The first is a rat-tail, the second a Continental type.



Figs. 163, 164 — Spoons
Seventeenth century slip-top and Dutch round-bowled types.

of seventeenth century spoons of the slip-top variety, from the Carvick Webster collection; and, in Figure 164, a corresponding rack of the round-bowled Dutch variety; and here let it be noted that an example of a round-bowled English pewter spoon has, I think, yet to be found, if perhaps one excepts caddy spoons.

Figure 165 gives a very good idea of what is implied by the use of the term *rat-tailed* as applied to spoons. This is of the rounded end, early eighteenth century form. A Continental spoon, of not too desirable type, is seen in Figure 166.

Salts

The salt occupied a very important position in the furnishing of the dining-table of bygone times, when the guests were graded as being "above or below the salt"; and, although the term has passed from usage in its former sense, the spirit still pervades at public banquets, where the guests of honour are ranged on

Figs. 167, 168 — Salts
Stuart spool-shaped examples.

Fig. 170 — Salts (*see text for dates*)

either side of the chairman at the head table, whereas the greater number must perforce submit to sitting amongst the "common herd" at the side tables.

In speaking of containers for salt, by the way, it is worth while to bear in mind that, while perhaps condoned by custom, the use of the term "salt cellar" is really quite incorrect. The French term for a salt container is *salière*, the proper English term is *salt*. It amounts to using the same word twice over, in its French and its English version, for *salière*, from which in this usage cellar is corrupted, is the French for salt. To English ears it suggested the idea of a cavity or depression.

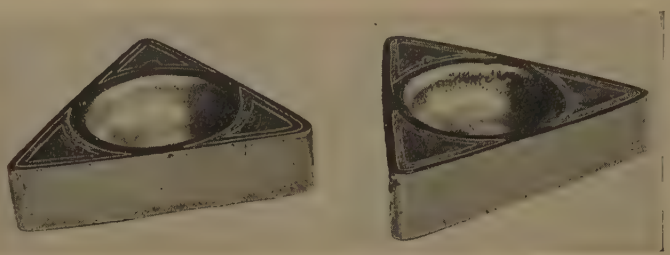


Fig. 169 — Trencher Salts (*late seventeenth century*).

To proceed. In Figures 167 and 168 are illustrated three fine late Stuart spool-shaped or standing salts, those in Figure 167 being in the Clapperton collection, whilst that in Figure 168, which shows delicate tooled designs covering the whole of the body, is in the de Navarro collection—as are also those in the two following illustrations; the pair of flat triangular-shaped trencher salts, Figure 169, being probably of the late seventeenth century and quite unique, whilst the late Stuart example to the left of Figure 170 is similar to one in Figure 167. The cup salt on the right is of the mid-eighteenth century type, as, also, is that shown in Figure 173.

Fig. 171 — Trencher Salt (*seventeenth or early eighteenth century*)

The two centre ones in Figure 170 are Continental, early eighteenth century; and Figure 174 shows a delightful little French salt of sprightly erect type of the same period and with a very small salt container, from my own collection.

The fine old trencher salt shown in Figure 171 is in the Walter Churcher collection and is of late seventeenth or early eighteenth century date.

Three salts of the more ordinary type, and of the eighteenth century, are shown in Figure 175; and again I have laid the de Navarro collection under contribution.

All the above examples of salts are English except where otherwise stated.

Tea Caddies and Other Things

A very daintily engraved English tea caddy of late eighteenth century workmanship is illustrated in Figure 172. It has, it will be noted, a small brass handle on the top and is also furnished with a lock and key. The inside of this piece is lined with steel and enamelled, which gives to it a wonderfully solid "reliable" feeling.

Fig. 172 — Tea Caddy (*late eighteenth century*)

Figure 176 shows a bonny little spice box, with loose cover, of the middle of the eighteenth century. Figure 177 is a double ended spirit measure (*c. 1820*). One is glad to be able to illustrate one whereon the capacities are plainly marked—¼ gill and ½ gill — for some proof would seem to be necessary to prove that these are not "double egg cups," a term so often wrongly applied to describe these pieces by many collectors whom one would expect to know better. Presumably the idea is that one end is for a hen's egg and the other for a duck's!! (I have it in mind that I have heard them described in this way.)

Figs. 173, 174, 175 — Cup Salts (*eighteenth century*). The second is a dainty French example.

Figs. 176, 177 — Spice Box and Spirit Measure
The latter is by no means an egg cup.

These two last pieces are from my own collection.

Ink Stands

Two very convincing little inkstands are shown in Figures 178 and 179. Cube-shaped, with two drawers and with removable tops revealing, inside the upper portion, the glass bottle to hold the ink, and with the removable tops having a pen-hole at each corner, these eminently practical little fellows are of Irish manufacture. The latter, which is in the Carvick Webster collection, bears inside the upper drawer the mark of Silvester Savage of Dublin, who was working in 1790. The former piece is in the de Navarro collection and unmarked.

Figs. 178, 179 — Irish Inkstands
The latter is from Dublin and bears the mark of Silvester Savage (*c. 1790*).

Household Gear

A colander from the Frank Creassey collection, Figure 180; a very finely modelled soup-tureen with ball and claw feet, made by Thomas Compton of London (*c. 1810*), (*Fig. 181*); and a tundish or funnel made by A. Hincham (*c. 1740*), (*Fig. 182*); both the latter from the Port collection, complete a trio of articles indispensable to the good housewife for the smooth working of her household.

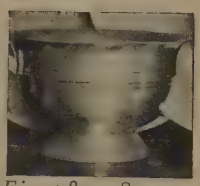


Fig. 183 — Sugar Bowl
It may also be called a finger bowl or porringer.

Figure 183 illustrates a delightful little early eighteenth century English sugar bowl, finger bowl or porringer of the handleless variety, whilst examples of porringers with pierced handles are shown in Figures 184–186. The five shown in the former illustration are in the Richardson collection, whilst those in the two latter are in the W. D. Thomson collection.

These vessels are found, from time to time, with incised horizontal lines around the inside of the body, each line being numbered from the bottom upwards, which goes to prove that they have been used in surgical work for bleeding-bowls or cupping-dishes, as they are variously termed, in which case the numbers on the inside must be understood to represent fluid ounces, a guide to the surgeon as to the extent of his operation. It is quite a mistake to apply these terms to *all* dishes of this type, whether graduated or not, as is so often done.

The specimens just considered all bear English marks and are of the period *c.* 1690–1720, but the same patterns were in use on the Continent. Examples of these, showing solid handles both plain and embossed, and pierced handles, are given in Figure 187, from pieces in the Charbonnier collection. The Continental examples are usually of much softer metal than their English analogues, whilst an American example by Frederick Bassett was illustrated in the February, 1923, number of *Art in America*. The date of this latter piece is *c.* 1790.

Another indispensable

Figs. 180, 181, 182 — Household Utensils of Pewter
The first is a colander, the second a soup tureen by Thos. Compton (*c. 1810*), and the third a funnel by A. Hincham (*c. 1740*).

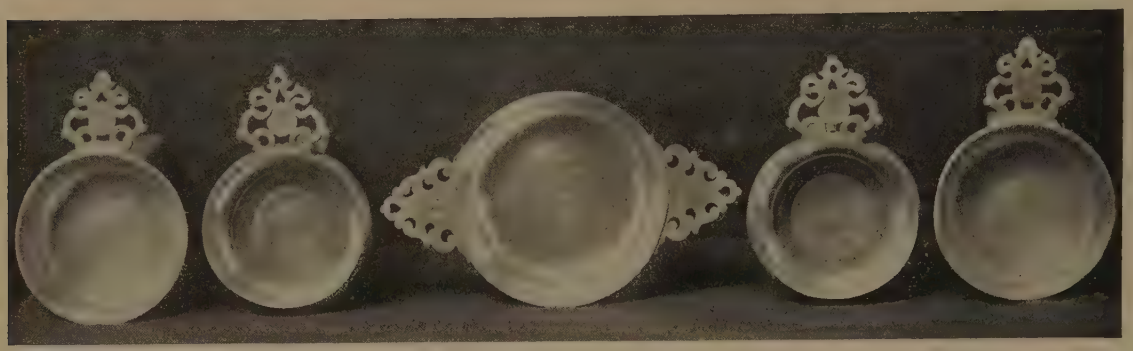


Fig. 184 — Porringers

article on the dining-table was the pepper-pot, a fine array of varying forms being shown in Figure 188, from

Figs. 185, 186 — Porringers

specimens formerly in the collection of the late A. L. G. Distin, but now dispersed. This illustration shows well that diversity of form was by no means a monopoly of the silversmiths, but one may as well be quite frank at the outset and admit that it is well nigh impossible to distinguish the Continental from the English examples, for many of the patterns would seem to have been made indiscriminately.

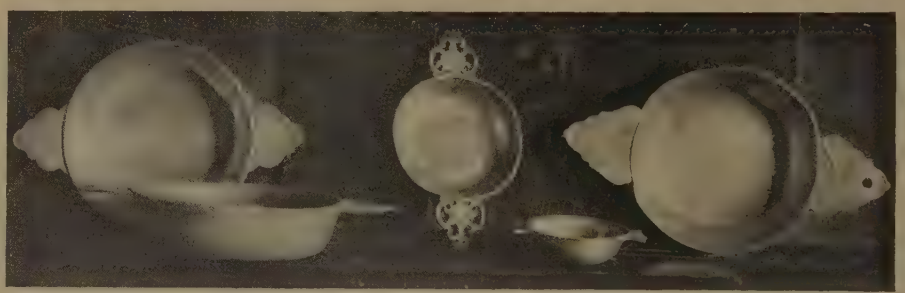


Fig. 187 — Continental Porringers

Fig. 188 — Pepper Castors

A very rare two-handled cup of the William and Mary period is shown in Figure 189, and a similar piece, but with cover and of slightly later date—*tempus* Queen Anne—is given in Figure 190. Both are in the de Navarro collection, whilst another similar example is in the fine collection of Alfred B. Yeates, Esq., F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., of London.

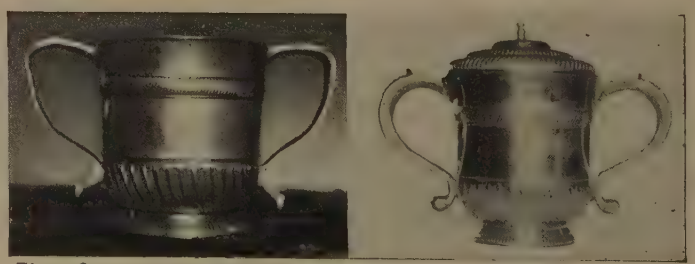
In Figure 191 is illustrated a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century English water carafe of no very particular charm; and in Figure 192, a pair of chimney

ornaments, a sight familiar to many of us in our childhood days on the kitchen mantelpieces of our grandparents. The latter are from the collection of Dr. Young.

Stills

An English pewter still, dated 1766, twenty-three and a half inches high and twelve inches in diameter, is shown in Figure 193, from the Port collection. These stills, though not of the greatest decorative value, are, nevertheless, very rare and extremely interesting, not more than six or seven of them being known to me. One, with two conical condensers, it has recently been my pleasure to introduce to the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, London—which now possesses three—very realistically reset in a carefully reconstructed representation of an old alchemist's laboratory.

The making of these stills and their complementary "worms" must have provided a considerable volume of work for the early pewterers, and as evidence of this we find, in no less than twenty-two of the London pewterers' touches, that some part of a still has been adopted as one of the chief devices.



Figs. 189, 190 — Two-Handled Cups
The first is of the William and Mary period; the second, Queen Anne.

Fig. 191 — Water Carafe (*late eighteenth or early nineteenth century*)

Snuff Boxes

Figures 194, 195, 196, illustrate a good series of the dainty little snuff boxes which were in use in the latter part of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century. Most of these examples are from the Churcher collection, as are the Scottish, pewter mounted horn snuff mulls shown in Figure 197 and bearing the mark of one Durie, a Scotch maker celebrated for their manufacture.

Fig. 192 — Chimney Ornaments

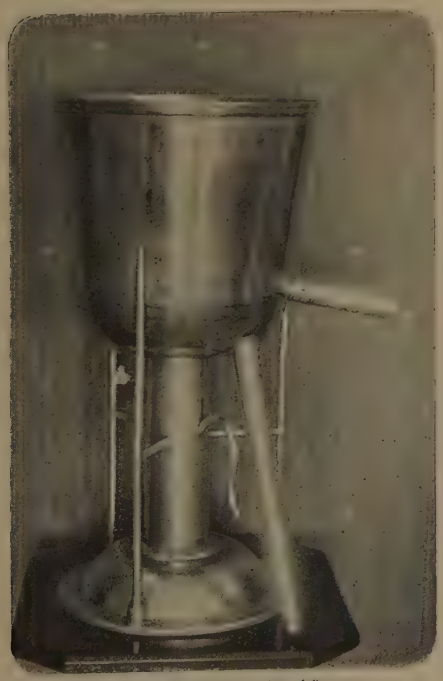


Fig. 193 — Pewter Still (*1766*)

Measures and Coasters

Figure 198, also Scotch, shows an unusual use for pewter, in the form of a two-handled *standard* measure. Very heavily made, apparently never having been turned or finished on the outer side, so as to leave every ounce of strength in the body to enable it to withstand hard usage, this fine piece, of the time of Queen Anne, bears, on a medallion soldered to the body, the Arms of the Borough of Stirling—a lamb upon a rock. Of gallon capacity, this measure, with four others of the same type, was formerly used by the Borough of Stirling as the standard by which other vessels were tested. It is now in the collection of Mrs. Carvick Webster.

Figs. 194, 195, 196 — Snuff Boxes

1479

Fig. 197 — Scotch Snuff Mulls
Horn mounted.

An English coaster or wine-slide (*c. 1800*) is illustrated in Figure 199. This piece, as is usual in these coasters, has a turned hardwood bottom.

Fig. 198 — Scotch Standard Measure

Figure 200 is included to show the affinity between the English pewter baluster measure and the old leather "Black Jack." The great similarity in shape and general feeling will at once be apparent. Both these fine pieces are in the Walter Churcher collection.

Fig. 199 — English Coaster

Miscellaneous Items

Turning to a few European types, Figure 201 illustrates a wine bottle, probably Swiss; and Figure 202 a beaker from the Yeates collection, and of Low Country origin.

Fig. 200 — Black Jack and Baluster Measure
The former of leather, the latter of pewter.

These Continental beakers are by no means uncommon, but I do not think more than half a dozen, even if so many, English ones of undoubted authenticity, are known to exist. Some are in use as chalices in Scotch country churches, but they mostly savour of Continental origin.

Fig. 201—Wine Bottle
Probably Swiss.

The wall-lavabo shown in Figure 203 is but one of many forms of this vessel. As illustrated, it is incomplete, for the underbasin is missing. These underbasins were either fixed to the wall below, on brackets, or rested upon a stand; but they were always present in some form to catch the superfluous water from the container above.

Six delightful little cups, some three and a half inches in height, appear in Figure 204, from the Walter Churcher collection. The odd one in the centre was purchased in Algiers, but they are all of European manufacture and make a fine little set of liqueur cups.

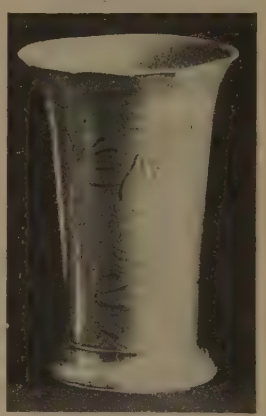


Fig. 202 — Low-Country Beaker

Guild Flagons

Two fine German guild flagons are illustrated in Figures 205 and 206 and represent well this type of vessel, the former being in the Yeates and the latter in the G. E. Davis collection. The shield on the lids of these vessels was used to display the arms of the guild or

Fig. 203 — Wall-Lavabo
The underbasin is missing.

of the donor, or the members' names, which also were frequently inscribed around the body of the flagon, as in those illustrated. Another German flagon of very pleasing form, from the Yeates collection, appears in Figure 207.

The standing cups illustrated in Figures 209 and 210, which are in the collections of Charles G. J. Port and Ernest Hunter, respectively, were used on the continent of Europe both for presentation purposes and guild use.

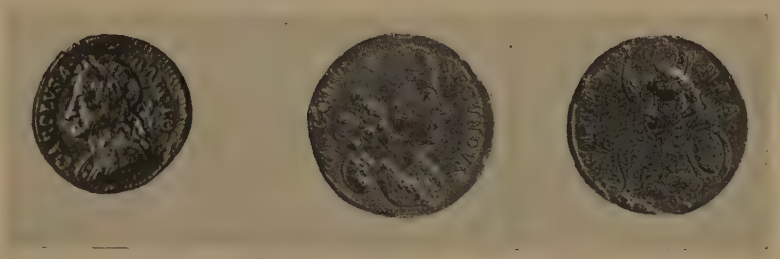


Fig. 208 — Pewter Coins

The former, which is German, and twenty-three inches in height, was presented "to the Town Piper, Johannes Weilinger, in recognition of his skill in music, 1729" and bears several German coats of arms. The latter, dated 1760, is an example of a Flemish guild flagon, the names of members being engraved both on the body and on the pendant medallions. This cup formerly belonged to the Guild of St. George, Ostend.

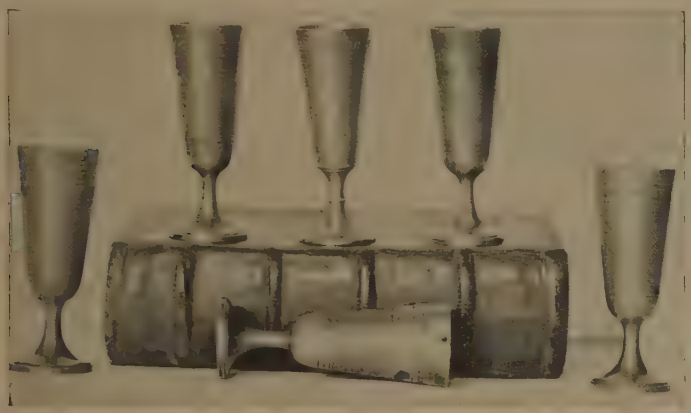


Fig. 204 — Continental Liqueur Cups

Pewter Coins

My story, for the present at any rate, is nearly told, and I have but to illustrate a few examples of the "Root of all evil," but seemingly one of the most necessary things in the world . . . *money!*

To many it will come as a surprise to know that coins were ever struck in pewter, but that such was the case is evidenced by those illustrated in Figure 208, which shows, a Charles II farthing, obverse, and a James II farthing, obverse and reverse.

By way of epilogue. When one recalls to mind that *all* the household utensils which now are made in china, pottery, earthenware, glass, galvanized iron, enamelled iron, sheet iron, block tin, aluminium and what not, were formerly made in pewter, one begins to realize what an enormous industry was that of the pewterer; and does it not open up, before the prospecting eye of the collector, a vast field of interests wherein his energies may disport themselves? There need be no monotony; possibly there is more variety than in any other branch of collecting and, withal, as a result, that restful repose which seems to reflect from the mellowed surface of the metal.

Figs. 205, 206, 207 — German Flagons
The first two are guild flagons.

Figs. 209, 210 — Standing Cups
The first is German (*1729*), the latter Flemish (*1760*).

Plate VI — Communion Chalice (*English, 1762*)

Engraved "For the use of the Associate Congregation of Lesley, A.D. 1762."
Owned by Francis Weston.

Chapter VII

The Composition of Pewter

IN the late Mr. Charles Welch's fascinating *History of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers of the City of London*, there are countless references to the various alloys which from time to time were ordered to be used for various kinds of wares, and also the records of fines and punishments inflicted for breach of the company's regulations; but if I am to avoid allowing myself to run into technicalities, I must endeavour briefly to set down such simple, general formulæ as will do nothing more than remove the first tarnish of ignorance from the mind of the uninstructed in such matters.

The basic metal of all the pewter alloys is tin, and in the early days the quality of English tin was realised to be so far superior to that of other countries that there was a great call for it from abroad, and the London Pewterers' Company made frequent applications to Parliament for laws to be passed prohibiting the export of tin except in the manufactured state, but such applications were doomed to disappointment.

With the tin was mixed, according to the alloy desired or the purpose for which it was intended, lead, copper, brass, antimony or bismuth, and more often than not two or three of these metals were blended together, for, in the heyday of the pewterers' art, several kinds of alloys were enjoined for various kinds of wares; thus "Fine Metal" was ordered to be composed of twenty-six parts of copper to one hundred and twelve parts of tin and this alloy was to be used for plates, saucers, dishes, chargers, salts, square cruets, square chrismatories and "other things which were made square."

The second quality was known as "Tin," wherein the alloy consisted of tin and lead, the proportions of which varied at different times from twenty-six parts of lead to one hundred and twelve parts of tin, to sixteen parts of lead to a hundred and twelve parts of tin, from which alloy was ordered to be made "all other things, such as round pots, &c., &c.," and these vessels were to be called "Vessels of tin (or pewter) for ever."

It is very difficult, nay, almost impossible, to be precise, because the standards were altered from time to time; but the average collector will not desire to go too deeply into the strict analysis of his pieces, which, moreover, would entail the removal from his treasures of fragments of the metal for this purpose! He will be content to know that the main constituent part of any of his pieces is tin, with the admixture of more or less lead, brass, copper, antimony or bismuth.

One pewterer, Richard Going of Bristol, used as one of his marks the device of the Tudor Rose and Crown with the words "Best" and "Bismuth" in labels above and below respectively.

One has often been asked if a certain piece were not made from "Silver-pewter" . . . ! There is no such thing as silver-pewter. It is possible that in the earlier days, with their limited facilities for the segregation of metals, lead of a slightly argentiferous nature was used when mixing the alloy, but anything in the nature of an intentional alloy containing silver is unknown, and the quantity at best which could have crept in through the cause indicated would be so infinitesimally small as to have no appreciable result on the mixture.

On early pewter spoons and other articles there appear, from time to time, signs of what looks unmistakably like gilding, but gilding was strictly forbidden to the pewterers and this apparent trace of it, however convincingly it may appear to be otherwise, is an oxide which has formed on the surface of the metal.

The Fashioning of Pewter

From the beginning it was the custom among the pewterers for various kinds of work to be performed by different classes of craftsmen; thus we find in the early records, that "Sad-ware-men" made sad-ware, by which is meant dishes, plates, chargers and other more or less flat wares; "Hollow-ware-men," as the name implies, made the more bulbous flagons, pots, tankards, etc.; "Spoonmakers" again, made spoons. Another branch was the lidding of stone-pots with pewter lids, and again there were men who specialised in the making of the pewter spiral "worms" for stills, whilst the turn-wheel turned the wheel which operated the lathe.

The methods of manufacture were simple; such things as plates, dishes, spoons, etc., were cast in gun-metal moulds — many of which are still in existence — and afterwards turned, polished and hammered.

Tankards and flagons were cast in several pieces which were afterwards soldered together and the joint turned down in the lathe, the handles being cast hollow, which was effected by pouring the molten metal into the mould and then, when sufficient time had elapsed for the metal next to the mould to cool, the latter was reversed and the unset inner volume of the metal allowed to flow out again. If one examines a flagon around the bulbous portion of the body the junction line will be plainly discerned.

It was enjoined by the London Company that all plates should be hammered around the bouge, as is so well shown in Figure 13. This hammering gives that feeling of great strength which one always experiences when handling a plate or dish which has been subjected to this process by an experienced hand.

Every action of the early pewterer was governed and regulated by his guild; he was not to work at night, first, because of the noise and, secondly, because good work

could not be performed in the dim, artificial light of those early days. Every particle of alloy had to be tested by the standards kept at Pewterers' Hall for the purpose before he could put up his wares for sale; no man could work at the trade until he had served his full term of apprenticeship and gained his freedom in the company, and no master was allowed to employ workmen — other than apprentices — who were not freemen of their guilds. "Alien" workmen, by which term is meant workmen from other towns, were not tolerated on any consideration except in the most exceptional circumstances; the weights per dozen and the sizes of the various articles were rigidly fixed and, as has already been shown, the constituent parts of the various alloys for different vessels, and even the quality of the solder to be used, were governed and regulated by the company.

From earliest times the marking of pewter was made compulsory, but in later years, and as the company lost control of its members through the falling off of the trade, through the advent of pottery, enamelled iron, earthenware and the other contributing causes, the enforcement of this became increasingly difficult.

Small wonder is it, then, that during so many centuries, English pewter gained and kept its wonderful reputation for being the best in the world.

Britannia Metal

Britannia metal was first made about 1770, but it was not brought into general commercial use until about seven or ten years later, when James Vickers made a specialty of it.

The difficulty of distinguishing between it and pewter will best be appreciated by the following description of it, culled from my friend Frederick Bradbury's excellent *History of Old Sheffield Plate*, where he gives the following:

"Britannia metal consists mainly of tin with an admixture of antimony and a little copper."

How nearly this approaches to the composition of pewter will at once be appreciated by reference to my notes on that subject above.

An average alloy for Britannia consisted of about one hundred parts of tin to seven of antimony and two of copper.

Thus it will be seen that although there *is* a similarity between the two, the proportion of tin in Britannia metal is *very* much greater than in any of the pewter alloys, and herein some of us believe we *actually see and feel* a difference, for Britannia metal has a harder, whiter, colder look, and a more "dense" surface, due to the entire absence of lead which was *never* used in its composition; it hasn't that wonderful texture which is one of the charms of pewter; moreover, it oxidises in a different way and seems to take on a blackish tarnish "beneath the burnishing", if one may use such an inaccurate description, whereas the tarnish of pewter expresses itself in an exterior oxide which can be felt by its very roughness.

Before me, as I write, stand two lidded tankards, the one marked Dixon & Sons, and the other bearing the marks of Edwards of London, the former a recognised maker of Britannia metal, and the latter of pewter.

To the casual observer these two tankards would seem to be identical in type, and apart from slight variations of the mouldings around the foot they are alike in general outline, shape of handle, plain-drum body, etc., and yet there is *a difference!* The lid of the Britannia metal specimen is either pressed from the flat or spun, and the edge is turned in similar to the folded foot of an old wineglass, whereas the lid of the pewter example is cast and solid. The metal in the former is hard and almost unscratched, whereas, in the pewter example there are those unmistakable little indentations and abrasions which bespeak the softer metal; in short, there is a *very real* difference which, however difficult to explain, is abundantly apparent. The Britannia metal looks clean and cold and almost new, yet, while the pewter example is just as clean and in as fine condition, it tells its own tale of years of use.

Turning from this aspect, however, one finds other and important points of difference. One of the most important is the appearance on many examples of Britannia of the makers' names, names which stamp them immediately as such. It is well for the serious collector to know that the following makers never touched pewter wares in any form: Dixon & Sons; Dixon & Smith; Broadhead & Atkin; I. Vickers; Wolstenholme; Ashberry; Colsman's Improved Compost; Stacey; Holdsworth; Smith, Kirkby & Co., etc.

Then again, so many of the Britannia metal wares are of such different designs from those of the pewterers as to cause one little uneasiness.

Tea-caddies, cream-jugs, sugar-basins, egg-cups, wine-strainers, octagonal and hexagonal tea-and coffee-pots, and those of Queen Anne fluted patterns with ball-feet and decorated finials on the lids, should *all* be treated with suspicion unless bearing the touch of a known pewterer.

The impression of small catalogue numbers on the undersides of salts, peppers, mustards, etc., is a sure indication that the pieces on which they appear are Britannia metal, for the catalogue era is one which has no charm for the pewter-collector, being confined practically to the period *since* about 1800, whereas we seek our treasures as long *before* that date as possible.

We will now pass to a consideration of the fourth item:

Genuine Old Pewter and Its Imitations

Here, again, we are up against one of those things which offers but little trouble to the experienced eye, but which it is *very* difficult to put down into writing.

A general rule which I have so often laid down is worth repeating, — "Pass *anything* which is suspect, no matter *how* enticing it may appear. There is so much that is beyond reproach that it is best to confine yourself to those pieces and to those alone. *Why should you* clog your collection with doubtful pieces which can never be anything but a source of anxiety to you when alone? What if, as will happen from time to time, a discerning fellow-collector pays your collection a visit? His *silence* on your doubtful items will be a more stinging lash than any criticism which he could pass upon your powers of discrimination!"

So much by way of generalization.

It is some source for congratulation that the faker has one great secret yet to learn before the finest of his pieces can become a terror to us, and that is, to imitate the spots and patches of corrosion which in some form, small or great, appear on the great majority of the genuine examples which have come down to our time. So far this has baffled him, but apart from this, some of the faked pieces are extremely clever and most convincing at first sight, blackened apparently with the neglect of years and everything complete to attract the eye of the unwary — *But*, in reality, this blackening is produced by a chemical which, for obvious reasons, were better not named here!

Now let us with a magnifying glass examine this blackening as done by the faker and compare it with the patina on a genuine specimen, and you will note that I use the word *patina* because I am now referring to those pieces which have but the lightest coating or veneer of oxide as opposed to those deeper blister-like incrustations which so often appear and which state is better grasped by the term "corrosion."

What do we gather from this microscopical examination? Just this, that the genuine patina has already set up the first stages of corrosion, giving to the surface of the metal a texture which resembles the beautiful granulation on the shell of an ordinary hen's egg, but the conclusion arrived at by our closer scrutiny of the faked piece is very different, for it reveals none of the granulations, but just what it is, — the "age" is *painted on* and the chemical cannot produce that same delightful surface.

As has already been said, some of the faked pieces are *very* clever and at the first blush have every appearance of being fine and genuine examples, but in the matter just referred to and in the lack of attention to other details, one soon discovers our friend's limitations which eventually enable us to condemn his wares. It would be so easy to put down here a few of these omissions on his part, but did one do so, one would but take away the whole value of one's tests by giving to the faker that very knowledge, the lack of which is our chief safeguard!

Another way to avoid fakes is to put yourselves in the hands of an acknowledged expert, one to whom reputation counts for more than the mere making of money. The fees which you will pay to him for his advice, or for obtaining pieces for you, will provide you with a first-class, gilt-edged security with each of your treasures, a guaranty which, if at any time you wish to pass on your pieces, will assist materially in the process of doing so.

If you are fortunate enough to have access to the collections of friends of wider experience than yourself, study their pieces and inveigle them into talking over your difficulties with you, and compare notes with them, by which means you will find an added joy in collecting, and many of your greatest stumbling blocks will melt away.

In this connection one might suggest the formation in the United States of America of a "Society of Pewter Collectors." Such a society is now in full and useful operation here in England, and of which I have been a joint-Honourary Secretary since its inception, and if I can assist in any way, by advice, in the founding of a kindred society across the water, I am here to command.

We hold our meetings at one another's houses and discuss the collections piece by piece, and it is impossible to overestimate the good which comes from *frank* but friendly criticism. It will teach you more than anything I can write to you, if you have amongst your number one or two collectors of sufficient knowledge to guide and train your eyes to separate the sheep from the goats.

I am sure that I can vouch for a hearty welcome from our society should anything come of this suggestion, and their whole-hearted co-operation with you in any step which you may take for the furtherance of the cult of old pewter.

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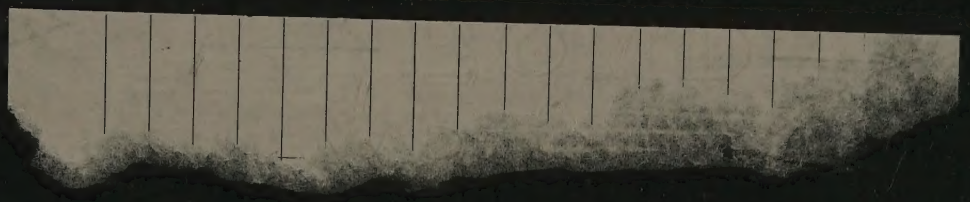

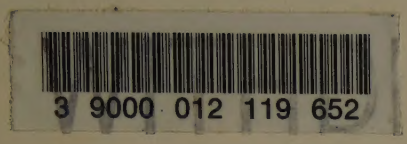
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